

**An Exploration of New Media Training
and its Impact on Women's Careers in an
Emerging Sector**

Martha Walker

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Department of Sociology in the Faculty of Humanities, Law and Social Sciences,
Manchester Metropolitan University

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This is a declaration to state that this thesis is the candidate's own work and has not been previously published or submitted in support of any other degree or diploma.

Signed:

Date:

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of women-only new media training on women's everyday lives examining the effect women-only new media training has on their career trajectories, life/work balances, self-esteem as well as their hopes and ambitions for the future. The study examines whether women-only new media training gives women a better understanding of the gender-technology relations at play in the workplace and how this affects their career choices and the decision making process. It looks at the everyday lives of two groups of women currently working in the new media sector, focusing on their individual experiences. One group attended a course entitled Multimedia for Women in the Cultural Industries (MUWIC) at the Women's Electronic Village Hall (WEVH), a women-only Information and Communication Technology centre. The other group attended other new media courses that were not women-only.

The study builds on previous gender and technology studies and adds to both knowledge and theory by exploring the effects of women-only new media training on women's experiences of working in the new media industry, an emerging sector where the knowledge of women-only training is minimal. The study provides information about training in creative technologies that are seen as crucial to the creative economy and that link has not been explored before.

The study's contribution to knowledge is that it focuses on the views of the women interviewed and is critically located in opposition to current policy initiatives that encourage women into the new media industry with no due consideration to the women who they are trying to attract or the reasons why some women may not be attracted to those workplaces. It builds on past research calling for more information on women's individual experiences of technology and shows how women-only networks can indeed create a much needed space virtually and in real life to transform existing gender roles creating real and lasting change.

List of Abbreviations

APEL	Acquired Prior Experiential Learning Experience
CER	Centre for Employment Research
CIDS	Creative Industries Development Service
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
EC	European Commission
EO	Equal Opportunities
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
EVH	Electronic Village Hall
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
NWDA	North West Development Agency
NOW	New Opportunities for Women
FE	Further Education
HE	Higher Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
MMU	Manchester Metropolitan University
MUWIC	Multimedia for Women in the Cultural Industries
VET	Vocational and Education Training
WEVH	Women's Electronic Village Hall

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Chapter 1

1. Introduction

1.0. Overview

The first reports of computing not being a gender-neutral working environment came to light in the late 1970s (Woodfield 2002). During the 1980s and early 1990s despite industry and government led equal opportunity campaigns to attract more women into the industry (Henwood 1993, 1996) these initiatives failed in their attempts to attract and retain both female employees and students alike (Platman and Taylor 2004; Faulkner 2005; Webster 2006; Burns et al 2007). One local Manchester based initiative however, the Women's Electronic Village Hall (here after the WEVH), a women-only information and communication technology centre, managed to attract and retain its female students (Dyson 1999; Ellen 2000; Walker 2005). The WEVH, a not-for-profit, voluntary sector, small to medium enterprise (SME) project initially funded under various European Equal Opportunities programmes, with local government monies and private funding from British Telecom was set up in 1992 and ran for over seventeen years eventually closing because of lack of core funding.

This thesis examines how the new media training at the WEVH influenced the career trajectories of those women who attended its courses and how the ethos of the women-only centre in a post-feminist climate helped shape their understanding of the gender-technology relationship in the working environment. It also looks at how women negotiate networking in their working lives both on-line and in 'real life' (Richards and Milestone 2000; Walker 2004).

With the collapse of the UK's heavy (Fordist) industries and a move away from hierarchical ways of working the emerging new media companies shared the same roots as other post-Fordist creative industries that grew out of the post punk do-it-yourself ethos reliant on their creativity, innovation and ability to adapt due to their size, and co-operative networking approach to survival (Powell 1990; Lash and Urry 1994; O'Connor 2007). This network of SMEs and freelancers with their flexible work patterns have emerged as the trendsetters at the cutting edge of the new media industry and in recent years have become the focus for both local regeneration initiatives and academics alike that are keen to obtain an insight into their working patterns which were in the past only available to those who worked within the cultural industries (Gill 2007; McRobbie 2004, 2007; O'Connor 2007; Hesmondhalgh 2007).

This thesis will explore women new media workers' experiences of working in this sector. Typically workers in the new media world work as freelancers and for/as small independent creative businesses. We will examine what measures and procedures are in place to deal with issues and problems relating to gender in women's everyday working lives in a climate where gender-inequality in the workplace is so difficult to talk about (Jorgenson 2002; Ellen and Herman 2005; Jensen and Takruri-Rizk 2006; Banks and Milestone 2011).

The working pattern of the new media worker often described as 'bulimic' in that the workers are put in the position of having to take on too much work that it makes them ill and then there are periods where there is no work at all (Gill 2007; 2011)

will be examined. This thesis is also concerned with the new media industry's culture of 'self-exploitation' (Beck 1992, 2000; McRobbie 2002). While acknowledging that this is a critical term, the thesis seeks to transcend analyses that blame the individual for their own exploitation (Gill 2011). The WEVH was funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) under the New Opportunities for Women (NOW) programme with the diffusion of gender mainstreaming being its main remit (True and Minitrom 2001). This research takes an interactional and institutional approach to gender as described by Wharton (2005), where gender is understood as a multilevel system intricately linked to a multitude of social processes through its impact on identities, social relations and institutions with the most important of these being social inequality. In a situation where heteronormative behaviour is the norm this inequality stems from the roles assigned to both men and women such as the expectation that women will be responsible for childcare whilst men have an uninterrupted career. The interactional approaches focus on the ways that gender emerges through social interaction with the institutional approach showing how gender is built into organisations, social structures and institutional arrangements (Wharton 2005: 54). Gender is understood as a '*major social organizing principle that sorts people into two separate but unequal groups*' (Foster 1999: 433) and as a social process and a group of forever changing social practices defined by time, cultural context and social organisation. Looking at it in this way ensures a focus on the links that reproduce gender and on the social construction of unequal difference (Hacking 1999) affecting gender technology relations in women's everyday lives.

Chapter Two deals with the new media industry both defining and providing an overview of the sector examining the cultural and economic changes over the last 25

years from the Tory government inadvertently financing a nation of ‘Punk’ DIY inspired ‘entrepreneurs’ via the ‘Enterprise Allowance Scheme’ (O’Conner 2007) to the coalition government further eroding gender equality influenced by the needs of big business and failure to assess the differing impact of cuts on women and men (Bird 2012). It explores the shift from ‘Fordist’ to ‘post-Fordist’ forms of production (Lash and Urry 1994) with its promise of more flexibility resulting in a different form of precarity and shows how the notion of flexible work patterns can have two very different interpretations according to whether you are the employer or employee (Lewis and Cooper 2005). This chapter also gives an overview of the new media sector in Manchester with its flagship Salford Quays based 200 acre mixed-use site with MediaCityUK, housing private business, higher education and a local school that is now an academy.

Chapter Three introduces the WEVH, its aims and objectives and offers an overview of its training methodologies explaining the ideology at a local, national and European level (Rees 1998; Walker 2004) for the funding of women’s technology projects at this particular time.

Chapter Four explores the literature available on women and their working environment (Gill 2002, 2007; Ellen and Herman 2005; Moore et al 2005a; Banks and Milestone 2011) highlighting the factors that influence their decision and in turn inform their career trajectories. Chapter Four also looks at the female/male dichotomy (Spender 1995; Rommes and Faulkner 2003) and its effect on gender-technology relations that in turn reflect and maintain the status quo (Henwood 1998). It explores the commonalties found in the new media and ICT industry and reflects

on how gender is inscribed in the technology itself and that a more thorough understanding of the gender -technology relationship can be achieved by deconstructing and challenging it at the three main levels: the individual, the structural and the symbolic (Adam and Wyer 1999-2000). Amy Wharton's definition of gender provides us with a useful framework that classifies social practices that organise gender enabling the workplace and other sites of '*interaction such as schools and colleges to be seen as sites for both embodying and reproducing gender.*' (Wharton 2005)

Chapter Five deals with methodological issues and introduces the theory behind this thesis outlining Wharton's interactional approaches to understanding gender (Wharton 2005). In seeing gender as socio-culturally produced as a hierarchical binary, albeit an ever shifting one, we can see how these gender differences between male and female which are often mutually exclusive make it difficult for women (Harding 1986; Code 1991; Hollander and Howard 2000; Rommes and Faulkner 2003; Banks and Milestone 2011). Butler rightly points out that that '*gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established*' (Butler [1990], 1999). The research methods and techniques used for data collection, analysis and processing are outlined in this chapter.

Chapters 6 through to 10 present the results from this survey. Chapter 6 explores women's experiences of the new media industry and examines the impact of their training on their career trajectories looking at the influence this has had on their choices and the decision-making process. Chapter 7 looks at women's lived experiences of the workplace exploring power dynamics, internal networks and looks

at how they manage their work/life balance. Chapter 8 looks at women's ability to articulate their position in the workplace, exploring the barriers, conflicts and promotion prospects that they encounter in their working lives. Chapter 9 looks at women's awareness of gender politics and feminism to see the effect this has had on their career choices and decision-making. Chapter 10 explores how women are networking and what role this plays in their working lives. Chapter 11 presents the concluding summary of key research findings. In the Conclusion, I reflect on the findings of the survey relating these back to the key issues and debates. Finally, I suggest ways in which a better understanding of the gender-technology relationship could be useful for agencies working in this area as well as the wider academic community.

1.1. Motivation

From an early age I have felt inspired by the strong working class women in my neighbourhood and later feminism. Images on the TV of women, some young like myself at Greenham Common whom I have remained friends with. I started volunteering at a local Women's Centre and at the age of nineteen I did voluntary work for a Women's Refuge and a local Law Centre as well as becoming politically active in the local community in Manchester. In 1991 after studying Software Engineering at Manchester Metropolitan University I was elected Women's Officer for the Student Union, a paid one-year sabbatical post. At around this time the Centre for Employment Research based at Manchester Metropolitan University were conducting a feasibility study looking at local women's information technology needs with the intention of setting up a women's computing centre. Soon, workers for the new centre called the Women's Electronic Village Hall were being advertised

for and with a background in both computing and women's politics I applied for one of two posts and was employed. The WEVH was a women's information and communication technology centre that ran for over seventeen years training hundreds of women in the Greater Manchester area. It grew from employing two full-time members of staff to having ten full-time members and several part-time staff. I was truly inspired by so many of the women who both trained and were trained at our centre and the numerous projects that were undertaken by us. Whilst working at the WEVH I undertook my MPhil at Manchester University under the supervision of Professor Alison Adam. Professor Adam received a promotion and moved to Salford University where I joined her. My MPhil focused on the innovative training methodologies developed at the WEVH and inspired me to explore the effects of this training in a work related context for my PhD. The WEVH changed women's lives and telling their story within an analytical framework became my aim. This research is full of the rich experiences that women have shared, inspiring change in others and themselves. This research is indebted to these women and dedicated to all the women of the world who are part of the ongoing struggle that is the emancipation of all women.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

This research sets out to explore the impact of women-only new media training on women's career choices and experiences. The study is concerned with women's everyday experiences of the new media industry and examines the individual experiences of two groups of women currently working in the new media sector. The case studies are based in Manchester in the North West of England, an area where

the new media industry is being promoted as an important growth area although women are currently under-represented and indeed marginalised (Ellen and Herman 2005; Richards and Milestone 2000; Gill 2002, 2007; Moore et al 2005a, 2005b; Banks and Milestone 2011; Henwood 1993). One group of women received training in new media at the women-only WEVH and the other group were trained at other mixed sex training centres. One of the issues that is raised by Richards and Milestone (2000) is the 'blurring' of work and leisure which when combined with the issue of men and women having different ideas and ways of networking has resulted in the reinforcement of existing patterns and hierarchies: a reinforcement of patriarchal heteronormative gender relations in the workplace.

Gill's (2002) critical study of the new media industry, which focuses on gender inequalities in the new media sector, shows that the very features that attracted women to the new media industry are also giving rise to a number of new forms of gender inequality leading Gill to ascertain '*that the new forms of sexism in new media represent a serious challenge to its image of itself as cool, diverse and egalitarian.*' (Gill 2002: 3) This study aims to build on this analysis exploring the influences that affect how women understand and negotiate these issues given the lack of formal structures that in the past have, in theory, allowed women's voices to be heard.

The study identifies and critically examines the effect that bespoke, targeted new media training has on women's career choices and their decision making process and how this in turn impacts on gender-technology work relations. It examines the view that attending a new media training course that includes gender politics/feminism as an intrinsic part of its approach enables women to have a better understanding of

dominant relations at play in the workplace, and explores how this affects the everyday lives of women including their careers, position in the workplace; their life/work balance and self-esteem where gendered meanings are inscribed in the technology itself (Adam 1998). As well as training women in key skills required in the creative new media sector such as building web sites, costing projects and working in a team to a set deadline the WEVH also placed an emphasis on raising awareness and debate about gender politics in the workplace.

The new media sector is seen as being increasingly important for the UK economy yet various indications show that women are facing direct and indirect discrimination in the sector (E-Skills/Gartner 2004), including under-representation in all branches and levels of the industry (Perrons 2004). This research seeks to examine the impact that women only training in new media skills is having on women's entry to, and experience of the new media sector. There is currently a lack of information about the impact of these training courses on individual women's career trajectories and the culture of the new media sector. This research will examine the impact of training methodologies, policies and practices on the career choices and decision-making processes of the participants.

Over the last twenty years there has been very little change in gender-technology relations. Evidence can be seen at all levels of the education system. In schools, science classes are continuing to reproduce and legitimise dominant gender-science relationships, socialising boys and girls for clearly defined gender roles (Hughes 2001: 287). Universities continue to encourage women to join their existing computer courses with the result that some women drop out or fail because the

system has not been set up with them in mind and those that excel are seen as exceptional thereby reinforcing the idea that women are not technical (Henwood 1998: 10). In the workplace women are still disproportionately confined to low-paid office work (Green et al 1993: 15) and if they do make it into more senior positions their sexuality and/or femininity are often brought into question and used to undermine them (Stepulevage 1997). In a more recent study Banks and Milestone (2011) state that: -

‘Even those women who were employed in creative and technical occupations (i.e. non-traditional roles), found that it was repeatedly assumed by male managers that they were more capable of, and indeed should take on, more traditional family roles in the firm when the need arose. Male managers would seek to use women to diffuse tense situations with clients by employing, as one manager described it, their ‘bright, sparkling and chirpy voices.’

(Banks and Milestone 2011: 9)

This study hopes to contribute to an understanding of good practice in training policies and initiatives aimed at widening women’s participation and exploring where the culture of the new media industry appears to be failing women. Skillset (2010) found overall that in the creative media industries there has been a slight increase in representation of women, from 38% in 2006 to 42% in 2009. However, this masks some major shifts in particular sectors, with considerable increases in some areas (most notably in photo imaging, from 30% to 37%) offsetting massive decreases in representation in other areas (for example, independent production for TV down from 46% to 38%, animation from 34% to 20%, other content creation from 33% to 15% and, most drastically of all, interactive content design, from 32% to 5% (Skillset 2010). Women currently make up 27% of the overall creative media

workforce (Skillset 2012).

In their critical study of the issues women face in the English IT industry Moore et al (2005b: 1) see gender as being conceived as a relational attribute produced through social practices. They see neither gender nor technology as a 'given'. Social relations are also seen to produce the characteristics of technology, a view that allows for the exploration of ways in which technology and related skills can become gendered.

Moore et al (2005b) found that (gendered) attributes were identified as being necessary to having a successful career in the industry and that there were problems with how 'female' issues were raised in the male-dominated workplace.

Ellen and Herman (2005) study found that '*women's career strategies included a rejection of the long-hours culture, despite the perceived effects on potential promotion and career development in the absence of alternative options.*' (Ellen and Herman 2005, cited in Webster 2007: 7) This is clearly a matter for the industry policy makers as not only will women be losing out in terms of gainful employment but the industry is putting the need to endure long hours before that of creativity and excellence.

This research will build on recent discussions advocating a multi-level approach to understanding the shaping of the gender-technology relationship at the individual, the structural and the symbolic levels (Adam and Wyr 1999-2000; Wharton 2005; Moore et al, 2005a; 2005b; Richards and Milestone, 2000; Banks and Milestone 2011). A need for research to focus on individual women's experiences of technology has been identified (Henwood, Plumeridge and Stepulevage 2000) and this study

seeks to promote a better understanding of gender-technology relations by focusing on individual women's work/career choices and the decision-making process.

This study explores the individual experiences of two groups of women currently working in the new media sector. One group attended a course entitled Multimedia for Women in the Cultural Industries (MUWIC) at the Women's Electronic Village Hall (WEVH) between six and ten years ago. The other group did not attend a course at the WEVH but have attended other new media courses that were not women only. The courses attended by the non-WEVH women were varied. Most attended Higher Education Degree courses where the new media element was part of an Arts based course where students were given access to a shared computer and/or a computer drop-in facility. There was no formal new media training on these courses.

Knowledge was mainly acquired through asking friends or technicians. Two women attended Sound engineering courses at SSR, the UK's first audio engineering school based in Manchester. They were both taught by male tutors and were the only women on their course. One of these women was disabled and the other had two children. Both women said they struggled with the long hours culture. All of the new media courses available at this point were subject to being able to pay fees with no childcare or course hours to suit women with children. These courses were purely technical training courses with no discussion on gender issues. Some women paid or were paid by their employers to attend the occasional one day or half day course run by a private company. These were very ad-hoc and again taught by men. During the late 90s and early 00s there were some drop-in sessions/courses held at The Deaf and Dumb Institute (DADI) in Manchester that a couple of women attended but again the tutors were male, there was no childcare and the hours often didn't suit women with

dependents. The focus of this study is women-only new media training with the non-WEVH group being the control group. They are in the main content creators, women who work in web design, multimedia authoring, web broadcasting, digital arts and design. Research into creative new media work consistently reveals that women are under-represented as content creators (see Milestone and Meyer 2011). The study tracks women's career progression since completing their training courses and seeks to provide a significant contribution to knowledge with regards to the long-term impact of women-only new media training on women's experiences of the new media industry.

This empirical study is critically located in opposition to relevant policy initiatives that are keen to encourage women into the workplace without either considering the women who they are trying to attract (Faulkner 2006; Henwood 1993) or the reasons why some women may not be attracted to those workplaces in the first place. Perhaps by exploring the culture of our new media workplaces (Richards and Milestone 2000; Henwood 1998; Faulkner 2006; Banks and Milestone 2011) we might understand why the policies are failing to attract and retain women in the industry. This study also critically examines the hypothesis that women gain greater confidence and skills in all-female training environments.

1.3. Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of this study is to explore new media training and its impact on women's careers in an emerging sector. The focus will be on how women-only new media training in particular is affecting women's career choices, their decision making process and everyday experiences by looking at two distinct groups of

women working in new media. One group has been trained in a women-only training environment and the other in a mixed-sex training environment. The focus is on exploring the impact of women-only training with the group who experienced new media training in a mixed- sex environment being used as a control group rather than for it to be a comparative study.

The study aims to explore the effects of women-only new media training and how this impacts on the gender-technology work relations by focusing on whether the innovative training methodologies enable women to have a better understanding of the dominant, patriarchal, hetero-normative relations at play in the working environment. The study explores women's understanding of these issues and how these are negotiated in their working environment where there are often a distinct lack of formal channels of support and where women's rights are seen to have been already met. The study hopes to contribute to an understanding of good practice in training policies and initiatives aimed at widening women's participation in new media at the same time as exposing how the new media industry is failing women. The study will build on existing studies focusing on gender and technology relations and further these by offering an insight into the effect of women-only training by exploring individual women's new media working lives.

The research questions for this survey were based around five themes that are outlined below. The first theme explores women's experiences of training by focusing on the following questions and issues:

- How do women become interested in new media? What sort of training/education have they undertaken since leaving school? Was their route to new media a structured, conscious career move or more ad hoc?

- Aside from the technical aspect of the training, did the course prepare women in any way for the work environment, and in what way? What are the differences in expectation and reality of the social aspects of the environment in terms of gender - is there a divide? Is the actual work experienced as gendered?
- Are they still involved in on going training and updating of skills? How is this supported financially? Do they feel they have the same opportunities as male colleagues?

The second theme of the study looks at women's lived experiences of the workplace:

- Are women's workplaces hierarchical in structure or do they have a flatbed structure? What type of work are women doing? Are they managing and if so who are they managing i.e. men and women or both?
- Do others perceive their jobs as being technical in the organisation?
- Where are women based for their work? Do they work from home/office/studio? What are these decisions based on? How does this affect their feelings of inclusion/exclusion?
- What are women's workloads like and how do they manage them? Is their work project-based and/or routine and what sort of deadlines do they have to deal with? Are they doing their own work/ teaching or doing a combination of both? What has determined this? Are they happy/satisfied with their work or how could this be improved?
- How are women finding out about job vacancies, promotions opportunities? How is this negotiated? What are the pros/cons of 'word of mouth' culture/ being in the loop?

The third theme examines women's ability to negotiate their position in the contemporary workplace:

- What are women's career decisions based on?
- Do women face particular barriers in the workplace? Are these barriers recognized in the workplace? How is this discussed/resolved?
- How is conflict dealt with? Is the set-up transparent and does it enable resolution?
- What are women's career prospects dependent upon? Do you have to be seen to be a player? Are part-time workers treated differently from full-time workers?

The fourth theme looks at women's awareness of gender politics/feminism:

- What have been the major influences on women's careers? Do they feel that there have been changes in the expectations for women with changes in legislation? Have they been influenced by role models and if so how?
- How have women achieved/got to where they are today? Do women feel it's just been a case of sheer graft? Or serendipity? Have the politics of the 80s, e.g. punk 'can do' mentality, that was also encouraged by the government's work schemes and the Prince's Trust, helped shape their career path?
- Are women's current positions different from what they envisioned them to be after finishing their courses? Is there a discrepancy between what they thought was achievable and their current situation and why is this so?
- What have been the barriers if any? Do they think these barriers are still there now? How are they understood/explained?

- Where do women see themselves in the future and to what extent do they think they can determine this?

The fifth theme looks at networks:

- Are women using networks? What type of networks are they using? How does this work and what do they network about? Do they feel that this makes a difference to their lives?
- Do women have face-to-face meetings outside of work? Are such meetings accessible to women and if not why not? Has being able to network on-line made a difference?
- How do women feel networking affects them in terms of their career opportunities, relationships at work, visibility in the workplace, confidence levels and sense of inclusion/exclusion in the workplace?

This research adopts a critical feminist perspective and mode of inquiry and reflection on gender inequality in its analysis of gender technology relations. It is mindful of *‘focusing on your own desire to understand, and facing each interview as an opportunity to understand more’* (Cohn 2006; Jacoby 2006) and adheres to McCall’s view of intersectionality where she found that *‘No single dimension of overall inequality . . . adequately describe [d] the full structure of multiple, intersecting, and conflicting dimensions of inequality.’* (McCall 2005: 1791) The most useful approach to intersectionality is a contextual one. A good model is the research of Arlene MacLeod (1991), where in her contextual analysis of women wearing the veil in Egypt she highlights the ambiguity of veiling in those particular cultural contexts and goes on to say that *‘if the veil enables women in Cairo to work*

for wages, it facilitates their choices and freedom, even as it signals how much choices operate within larger systems of inequality.’ (MacLeod 1991: 184) This resonates so much when looking at a project such as the WEVH being a women-only project in a time when there were/ still are so few women’s spaces in the city (Richards and Milestone 2000) and yet as discussed below [Chapter 3], being a women-only positive action project it was inevitably short-lived (Rees 1998).

1.4. Conclusion

This chapter introduces and provides an overview of the study. An outline of each chapter is given as well as the overall aims and objectives. Background information on the Women’s Electronic Village Hall is presented and the factors contributing to the emergence of the new media industry are outlined. The researcher’s motivation for carrying out the study is discussed in detail.

Chapter 2

2. An Overview of the New Media Industry

2.0. What is the New Media Sector?

In 1997, the UK Government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) created a definition of Creative Industries businesses defining them as a set of related subsectors which *'have their origin based in individual creativity, skill and talent and have a potential for wealth and job creation through generation and exploitation of intellectual property'* (DCMS 2002) within which it included the sub-sectors of Advertising, Architecture, Arts and Antiques, Crafts, Design, Designer Fashion, Digital and ICT, Music, Publishing, Radio and Television, Software, Computer Games and Electronic Publishing, Video, Film and Photography and Visual and Performing Arts. In addition to the long established creative industries at this time a number of new creative sectors were emerging which were harnessing the opportunities possible through the use of new media technologies. In this period web design, multimedia and gaming the move from analogue to digital has seen a dramatic growth in new media work (Flew 2005).

The new media sector offers an insight into changes that have been taking place over the last 25 years where there has been a shift from the mass production and consumerism of Fordism to a more specialised regime of production involving for example 'just in time' technology allowing the producer to target a niche market using a small team of workers with specialist skills to produce the exact amount of goods as required or where a company specialises in making a single product such as the micro-chip. This differs from the principles of Fordism where a product would be

mass produced and made from start to finish in the factory, where a job was for life and unions would negotiate working terms for the whole of the workforce. Castells argues: -

‘The successful organizations are those able to generate knowledge and process information efficiently; to adapt to the variable geometry of the global economy; to be flexible enough to change its means as rapidly as goals change, under the impact of fast cultural, technological, and institutional change; and to innovate, as innovation becomes the key competitive weapon.’ (Castells 1996: 171)

The post-Fordism ‘flexible specialization’ concept can be seen clearly in the cultural industries and in particular the new media industry where the means of production, including the actual technology, is forever changing and where workers are expected to be available around the clock in order to complete targets only to be put on hold until the next project comes along with the guarantee of work being within reach if they have been able to afford to keep abreast of the new applications/technologies.

Flew (2002) identifies three trends that are responsible for the increasingly dominant position of the creative industries in contemporary economies. Firstly, the development of cultural industries as an object of public policy alongside trying to establish how cultural development can be supported through cultural policy.

Secondly, the rise of the knowledge-based economy and the discourse around this that has provided a stimulus to the development of the creative industries. Thirdly, a decline in the manufacturing industry and a shift to the services industry as the main

employment sector has raised important issues about the nature of services sector employment and the services industry model.

In his Hoxton based study examining the role of culture in the regeneration of our cities Pratt (2009) notes that, *‘The problem for policy makers, even if they understand the process, is that the cycle happens so quickly and that the key generative agents do not have time to establish themselves (artists or new media producers in this case). What wins out is money, which as we can see is increasingly focused on consumption and hence, to an extent, parasitic of the new creativity that has characterised Hoxton.’* Pratt (2009) explains that one of the main ways in which the cultural industries was given a kick start in our cities was due to an *‘element that reduced the risk for developers and enabled the informal mixed use activity: the reform of the Use Classes Order (UCO).’* Restrictions were relaxed allowing buildings that had previously been set aside for light manufacturing to be used as artist studios. This coupled with economic decline and the withdrawal of public sector funding for the arts (McRobbie 1999) and the helping hand of the Tory backed ‘Enterprise Allowance Scheme’ which funded the activities of the Punk inspired, government assisted country of entrepreneurs or DIY (Do it Yourself) culture (Pratt 2009). In Hoxton however artists’ production networks and new media production networks weren’t focused on the City but on the wider British art scene, music, animation, film, TV and the advertising industry, and like their counterparts in other cities as the rents rose they were forced out and replaced by consumer residents (Pratt 2009).

The Hoxton story is rather similar to Manchester in that a number of the key people had gone to college together and went on to develop a social network sharing resources as well as competing for work first in web design, and later on the fringes of advertising. Social and cultural relationships were more integrated with economic ones in creative partnerships making it difficult to distinguish between them. After the market crash of 2000 the second wave of new media growth has been more closely associated with advertising. In addition a second wave of more financially orientated companies has developed (Pratt 2006).

In the Prime Minister's speech on supporting economic growth he highlights the creative industries as an important growth area in rebalancing the economy and wants to create the right environment to start and grow a business, making sure that people working in the creative industries have the right managerial and leadership skills to do so. The government has committed to introducing a 'one-in one-out' rule for new regulations, sunset clauses, and an immediate review of all inherited regulation in the pipeline (Cameron 2010).

The most recent statistics for the Creative Industries, published December 2011 (DCMS 2011a) show that:

- Creative industries contributed 2.9% of the UK's Gross Value Added in 2009; this is an increase from 2.8% in 2008.
- 1.5 million people are employed in the creative industries or in creative roles in other industries, 5.1% of the UK's employment.
- Exports of services by the creative industries accounted for 10.6% of the UK's exports of services.

- There were an estimated 106,700 businesses in the creative industries on the **Inter-Departmental Business Register** (IDBR) in 2011; this represents 5.1% of all companies on the IDBR.

The Chancellor plans to give tax relief to three of the UK's key creative industries from April 2013. George Osborne announced in the Budget his intention to introduce tax relief for the Animation, Video Games and High-End TV production sectors subject to state aid approval and following consultation. Tax breaks for Animation and TV would aim to reverse a trend of UK productions being made overseas and attract foreign companies to make their programmes in the UK. Tax relief for Video Games alone could increase the sector's contribution to the UK economy by £280 million over the next five years (DCMS 2012b).

The Government support for the creative industries is shown with the newly formed Creative Industries Council (DCMS 2011b). The aim of the Council is to provide the creative industries with a 'real voice' to support the Government in identifying ways to enable the sector growth. The Council consists of leading figures from across the creative industries including TV, computer games, fashion, music, arts, publishing and film. It recognises that the *'UK leads the world in creative talent, representing over five per cent of our economy and a large and rapidly growing share of our exports, we have the largest creative sector in Europe. But we can't take that for granted.'* The Creative Industries Council will provide a forum for action by the industry and hopes to ensure that it will have a strong voice in developing a partnership with the Government. The Council aims to focus on a limited number of key issues with each area being examined by a working group made up of Council

members with the greatest expertise in the subject. The groups will focus on skills and training in the creative industries, access to finance and 'routes to scale', which covers intellectual property, innovation and exports (DCMS 2011b).

2.1. The Nature of New Media Work

This thesis is concerned with the promise of post-Fordist capitalist labour practices (Lash and Urry 1994) where 'flexible specialisation' i.e. working for a premium wage with working hours to suit appears to offer women the working conditions necessary for them to have both a family and a paid working life when in reality this new form of labour organization - 'precarity' has simply enabled them to move from one set of exploitative working practices to another with 'precarity' being the common thread (Neilson and Rossiter 2006). This thesis is also focuses on where these new organizational practices, digital production, and immaterial labour meet (Ross 2003; Deuze 2007).

Neilson and Rossiter (2006) suggest that: -

'..the concept of precarity is constitutively doubled-edged. On the one hand, it describes an increasing change of previously guaranteed permanent employment conditions into mainly worse paid, uncertain jobs. In this sense, precarity leads to an interminable lack of certainty, the condition of being unable to predict one's fate or having some degree of stability on which to construct a life. On the other hand, precarity supplies the precondition for new forms of creative organisation that seek to accept and exploit the flexibility inherent in networked modes of sociality and production.'

According to Milanese activist Alex Foti (2004), cited in Neilson and Rossiter (2006), precarity is: -

‘..being unable to plan one's time, being a worker on call where your life and time is determined by external forces.’

The term doesn't just refer to the various types of precarious, flexible exploitation: from illegalised, seasonal and temporary forms of employment including homework, subcontractors, freelancers or the self-employed. *‘..its reference also extends beyond the world of work to encompass other aspects of ‘intersubjective’ life, including housing, debt, and the ability to build affective social relations.’* (Neilson and Rossiter 2006)

The opposite of precarity is not however the safety of regular work and having access to material goods such as secure housing. This is in fact just is another form of precarity, where people's time and energy are taken up with the 'financialisation of daily life', where their social life is compromised and the pressure to stay on the treadmill affects people's mental well-being (Neilson and Rossiter 2006).

Government spending cuts have affected support for the creative industries environment resulting in a reduction of available, skilled freelance workers. As a result of these cuts, agencies are seeking to recruit more freelance rather than permanent staff owing to the current intermittent nature of the work (Skillset 2011). The intermittent nature of the work also means that employers are more likely to employ 'flexible' workers. Lewis and Cooper (2005) explain how flexible-working practices could indeed be interpreted by employers in a variety of ways including: -

‘..the rearrangement of working times to suit individual needs, job-shares, or the undertaking at home of tasks which would previously have been associated with day-time, bodily presence, in the office. In practice, however, most employers interpret ‘flexibility’ in terms of giving some employees the opportunity to reduce working hours by working part time or ‘fractionally’ (as a percentage, or a ‘fraction’ of a whole time equivalent) and few offer any other type of flexible working.’ (Swan and Cooper 2005; Lewis and Cooper 2005)

It is clear that the range of available *‘flexible’* options open to employees who wish to enhance their work-life balance is very limited and limiting.

Another problem with these types of cuts is that part-time workers can be seen as temporary ‘fillers’ and women’s non-linear careers are constantly hijacked by the gender-biased work ethics present in our culture (Moore et al 2005; Lewis and Cooper 2005; Gatrell 2005). However, although part-time work is more readily available to mothers than to fathers it is also concurrently associated with a reduction in mothers’ career status, and with discrimination at work (Williams 1999).

Perhaps employers’ narrow interpretation of flexibility is due, in part, to the possibility that the whole idea of work-life balance poses a problem for employers.

Fleetwood (2007) suggests that, in neo-liberal market economies such as the UK and the USA, any policy, which is developed to improve the situation for workers, is likely to achieve only limited success. This is because, in a market-driven economy, employers will usually seek to find ways of re-shaping ‘worker friendly’ policies to

employer advantage - quite possibly at the expense of those staff for who the policies were originally intended. Fleetwood argues that, because negative flexible working practices are ‘employee unfriendly’ and/or ‘family unfriendly’ they tend not to be the kind of practices that enable homework integration but act, instead, as constraints. This accords with Blair-Loy’s suggestion that some employers may regard ‘flexibility’ as an opportunity for cost saving. Thus, part-time salaries may be paid to workers (often mothers) with full-time responsibilities. At the same time, full-time workers (often fathers) are expected to be ‘flexible’, meaning they are required to work additional, atypical hours for little or no extra pay. Thus, the notion of ‘flexibility’, in relation to employed mothers and fathers, may be interpreted by employers as both justification for placing working mothers on the ‘mummy track’ (Blair-Loy 2003), and as an opportunity for intensifying fathers’ workload (Swan and Cooper 2005, cited in Gatrell and Cooper 2008: 2).

Hacker (1989) points out that even if projects are set up in the spirit of equal opportunities employee’s needs can be quite different from those of their employers. In her longitudinal study of the American telecommunications company AT and T Hacker found that work areas that women were fighting to be moved into were those very areas that the company would eventually be automating. She found that sex and race were better predictors of structural change and of technological displacement than were the traditional categories of management and non-management.

In a recent article in the Guardian Jane Martinson noted that “*A combination of the relatively high cost of childcare (up to a third higher than the national average), the distances travelled and the difficulty of finding flexible jobs all appear to be*

detering a large number of women from working in London.” The article goes on to say that “that single mothers are set to lose 8.5% of their net annual income by 2015 - more than a month's income for every year - because of the impact of tax and benefit changes set to take place between 2010 and 2015. Cuts to the childcare element of the working tax credit introduced by the coalition government in 2010 is one of the most harmful changes.” (Martinson 2012) The government is clearly not taking the issue of encouraging women into the workplace seriously as long as it allows this type of policy to essentially prevent women from taking up job opportunities due to the risk of impoverishment.

2.2. The New Media Sector in Manchester

In the last fifteen years many UK cities have focussed on the new media sector specifically and the creative industries in general as a crucial part of their local economic strategy. This interest in the regeneration of the cities and potential for economic growth through the development of the creative industries has led to local governments adopting specific creative industries strategies and the establishment of agencies with a remit to support their economic development. Manchester has been at the forefront of this initiative with its Creative Industries Development Service (CIDS), one of the largest agencies in the UK. CIDS was a leading, regional, not-for-profit agency that formed part of the economic development and small business support structure in the Manchester area. It was funded in the main through the North West Development Agency (NWDA) and has representation from a wide body including local government, local economic development agencies, the private sector and both Higher and Further Education institutions. Regional Development Agencies including the NWDA were closed down by the government in 2010 (Gable 2010)

resulting in a huge blunder where £1.1bn of European Regional Development Funding earmarked for the North West was unable to be utilised due to the closing down of the Regional Development Agencies which provided the monies required for the matched funding in order to release it (BBC News 2011).

Northwest Vision and Media has taken over from CIDS. Its board of directors consists of senior representatives from the broadcasters, trade associations and unions in the North West region and it advertises itself as the media industry's provider of one-stop training solutions for the North West region and with ESF funding is targeting marginalized groups including women. Its aims are to deliver a programme of training activities for the North West and in collaboration with other agencies be involved in setting up creative apprenticeships. The programme comprises a wide variety of activities that are designed to implement sustainable mechanisms to help target groups who find it difficult to access work in the cultural and creative industries sector. NorthWest Vision and Media work on behalf of the TV, film, radio and digital content industries with a focus on creating a world-class media economy in the North West. One of their main aims is to provide film and TV makers, and media professionals with a range of services from marketing advice to providing pre and post-production facilities.

In April 2012 the Chancellor announced that along with the four UK capital cities Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Bradford and Newcastle are set to become the top ten super-connected cities with ultrafast fixed broadband access, and large areas of public wireless connectivity. Ultrafast is defined as having a minimum download speed of at least 80Mbps. The ten cities will share £100million to enable

them to use the new system to drive growth, attract new businesses and transform the way services are provided and accessed (DCMS 2012).

MediaCityUK based at Salford Quays is home to the BBC and Granada Studios is moving there this year. MediaCityUK is being developed in two phases with the second phase in 2012 being dependent on the success of the first phase completed in 2011. The relocation of parts of the BBC to Salford Quays will establish the largest BBC production centre outside London establishing the city region's role as a national and international media centre. There are over forty service companies based at MediaCityUK as well as the teaching and research department of Salford University and Oasis Academy Media City formally Hope High School. The development of the relationship between the creative industries and the FE/HE sector in Greater Manchester has resulted in a wider strategic vision of 'Knowledge Capital' enabling an insight into and understanding of how 'the Knowledge Capital' and 'the Capital' can be developed, sustained and changed. By using the talents and skills of individuals and groups, technological and social networks and the software and culture that connect them Manchester has shown how the knowledge that a company possesses and can be put to profitable use.

The North of England is home to 16% of the workforce that forms the Creative Media sector (Skillset 2009). The majority of these companies are SMEs, many employing less than five people. Freelance workers form 29% of this sector (Skillset 2009) with women making up 23% of this workforce sector in the North of England compared to the wider Creative Media workforce at 42% (Skillset 2009). It is crucial that our small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are supported as these smaller

companies are often ahead of the game due to their flexibility, creativity and innovation and being the ‘movers and the ‘shakers’ with their close ‘followers’ benefitting both financially and in terms of kudos (Castells 1996).

According to Skillset (2011) the North of England has very good links with higher education and further education institutions but young graduates tend to lack general ‘life’ skills or so called ‘soft’ skills. A recent study of new media employers in Manchester, however, shows that some have a slightly schizophrenic attitude to the skills they require from potential employees in that they actively recruit women to fulfill their ‘soft’ requirements whereas men are actively recruited for their ‘harder’ technical skills (Banks and Milestone 2011: 8). So, we find that although there has been a shift away from Fordism to a work culture where the ability to network and be flexible is highly valued, Banks and Milestone (2011) found that in cases where a woman might be employed to balance out or contribute to the creative or technical production aspects of a company this was not even considered, and that this omission is widespread. For the most part women were only seen as being able to counterbalance male innovation and creativity by taking on supporting roles that befitted their ‘natural’ gender attributes: women’s creative and technical skills were simply not acknowledged by male managers (Banks and Milestone 2011: 9).

Interestingly new media skill shortages in the North of England are affected by two factors in particular - the move down south to London of the more talented and able people and the attraction of drama productions in the summer months when higher pay and kudos are greater. According to Skillset (2011), the sector is also short on management and leadership skills with some organizations setting up their own

bespoke training and development provision to help cater to that gap. There is no mention of the differences in gender here or how the industry could help ensure that it has a stable, happy workforce who don't need to travel down south to maintain a decent standard of living. Neither gender nor childcare are mentioned as causes of the shortages of skilled craftspeople and managers and yet it is clearly documented that among working parents, especially those employed in managerial and professional roles, long hours and heavy workloads have been shown to create pressure on relationships with partners and children, resulting in both stress related behaviours and illness. There does appear to be a direct correlation between the number of hours worked and the levels of stress caused by the degree to which parents feel physically and emotionally torn between paid work and their duties as parents (Swan and Cooper 2005; Cartwright and Cooper 1997; Worrall and Cooper 1999).

In their study of the ICT sector in England, Moore et al (2005) are concerned that we do not

'..disregard the very real problems facing women currently in the sector. These difficulties should not be 'glossed over' in order to encourage more women into ICT in the future. Whilst many from their initial sample indicated their overall satisfaction with their ICT careers, there remain various indications that women are facing direct and indirect discrimination in the ICT workplace. These include the disproportionate number of women with male line managers (73%) and the fact that only 1 in 5 IT workers in the UK are women (E-skills UK/Gartner 2004: 54).' (Moore et al 2005a: 20)

This study focuses on female new media '*symbol creators*,' those '*personnel responsible for the creative input in texts, such as writers, directors, producers, performers*.' Hesmondhalgh (2002: 34) The study sample consists of 55% self-employed women many of whom work on their own or with one other person. Flew (2004) sees the rise in freelance workers as a positive move, putting an end to bureaucratic control via the market mechanism and enabling creative workers to obtain an overview by working in both market and non-market environments. McRobbie (2002) and Gill (2000), however, see this newfound independence for many women as leading to disappointment and self-exploitation due to the isolated nature of their work. It is not just the self-employed that are affected though, Du Gay (1997) believes that a 'Foucaudian' concept can be seen in organisations where the individual is encouraged to take on the culture of the organisation, in this case 'enterprise culture' which merely serves to ensure that the workers exploit themselves through self-regulation or lack of it in a market where the onus is on the individual to succeed in an environment that offers little support but has high expectations of its workers.

The Women's Electronic Village Hall (WEVH) to enabled women to build a strong support network before entering the industry in an environment where the teaching methods address the needs of that particular group rather than the needs of the industry. The industry itself does need to be challenged but this is a much wider issue and not something that can be addressed within the limitations of this thesis.

2.3. Conclusion

This chapter gives an overview of the new media industry describing in detail both its history and development and giving a definition of what exactly constitutes the new media industry in term of occupations. It highlights how the new media industry gives us a valuable insight into the changes in working practices that have been taking place over the last 25 years with moving away from Fordism to a more specialised regime of production. It gives us an insight into the political and social climate that enabled the creative industries to flourish and examines in detail the difficulties of new media working conditions. It looks at the sector showing its development and highlights the problem areas where the industry itself is failing due to its lack of commitment in ensuring that gender technology relations do not impact on both men and women's life/work balance.

Chapter 3

3. The WEVH

3.0. Introduction

The Women's Electronic Village Hall (WEVH) was an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and new media training and resource centre based in central Manchester. It provided women-only ICT and new media training and resource facilities for women from July 1992 to April 2010. It provided support and training to thousands of women in the Greater Manchester area.

The Women's Electronic Village Hall was established in 1992 as a public access point for women into the Manchester Host, the UK's first public access information and communications and system, run by Poptel, a not-for-profit company. A survey was carried out on behalf of the Pankhurst Centre that examined the need for a women-only training centre through having consultations with women-only organisations in the Manchester area. The Pankhurst Centre is a women only community centre that was originally going to be the home of the WEVH but they withdrew because of the training targets set by the funders. The WEVH initiative was saved as a group of women supporters stepped in to set up a steering group ensuring that the project went ahead.

Through consultation with potential users the feasibility study also showed a whole range of requirements needing to be taken into consideration. Two of the most outstanding of these were that 84% of the respondents wanted women-only training with 43% of women experiencing difficulties with male trainers. Women also stated

that they found the patronising and often sexist attitudes of male trainers problematic (Girbash 1991: 36) The Women's EVH was the first women-only new media training centre in the North West. It was the only training centre offering bespoke women-only new media training and offering this free, with childcare and travel costs for the trainees. Other private sector professional computer training courses were available but their fees were hundreds of pounds for a short two or three day course and were taught by men. Some WEVH courses could last up to six months and required three days per week commitment. The WEVH courses were unique in that they were run for women by women and it is this aspect that has partly made the training so successful and different from other training available. Appropriately skilled new media trainers were also rare and the WEVH had very highly qualified staff. There were no other centres offering women-only new media courses at this level in the North West area at that time. The Women's EVH offered subsidised evening courses for working women and also income generated by providing training for voluntary and public sector groups. The women who attended WEVH courses couldn't afford to pay a private company for the training they received at the WEVH. It is more likely that women would now seek out a local college to obtain some sort of similar training in terms of course content.

The Electronic Village Hall concept originated from a Scandinavian initiative that provided disadvantaged remote rural communities lacking in telecommunications facilities with information and communication technology centres enabling them to access training, education and public and private services. The first of these centres was established in Hrjedalen, Sweden and Lemvig, Denmark in 1985. The idea was taken up by Manchester City Council in partnership with the Centre of Employment

Research at Manchester Metropolitan University resulting in them securing funding for three Electronic Village Halls in Manchester. One EVH was gender based: the Women's Electronic Village Hall; the second was culturally based: Bangladeshi House in Longsight, Manchester; the third was Chorlton EVH based in Chorlton, south Manchester. All three of these EVHs would receive funding through the European Social Fund under the New Opportunities for Women Fund, along with matched funding from local government via the now disbanded City Action Team as well as private funding from British Telecom. This aspect of the EVH projects was co-ordinated and administered by the Centre of Employment Research.

The WEVH was set up in July 1992 as a company limited by guarantee with charity status and a voluntary management committee that was made up of representatives from the local community, WEVH staff and former trainees. The WEVH was originally based in a Hindu cultural centre in Whalley Range, south Manchester before moving to bigger and more accessible premises in Manchester city centre. The original funding for the WEVH enabled the organisation to initially employ two full-time workers. Over the next eight years a mixture of European funding, local Further Education and Higher Education partnership monies, coupled with local government grants meant that the WEVH could employ a further eight full time and seven part-time members of staff. The WEVH training facilities grew from one training room to six, including a drop-in/library/resource space. Off- site training in local community centres where the WEVH often provided both the computers and trainers with technical back up was also one of the ways in which communities who could not travel to the centre or just wanted training in their own space could benefit.

The WEVH had a volunteer management committee, elected at their Annual General Meetings that were involved in both the operational and strategic running of the centre with a range of sub-groups that dealt with a variety of issues including marketing and finance. These sub-groups would report back their findings and suggestions to the other management committee members at their monthly meetings. The management committee was in turn answerable to WEVH members and reported back to them at the Annual General Meetings, through the minutes of the monthly management committee meetings and also via the WEVH Annual Report, a yearly document that was sent out to various groups and committees.

Strategically, the WEVH aimed to influence and inform policy decisions at local, national and European level. The WEVH achieved this by taking part in both European and National projects and conferences as well as by publishing reports relating to women and new media/ICT training and education. At an operational level the WEVH provided high quality new media/ICT training to women including those who may not have been able to access mainstream training because of finance or childcare issues for example. The WEVH also supported local businesswomen through a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) project NetWISE. This project supported women in the setting up and maintaining of their small businesses, ensuring that they were aware of the Information Society and had access to Information and Communication Technology and Multi-media facilities.

The WEVH had a unique training approach in that it provided high quality training in an informal and supportive environment and in doing so attracted women from all sectors of the community. The WEVH was first set up in the Gita Bhavan centre, a

fully accessible Hindu cultural centre in Whalley Range, Manchester. This was just one of the measures taken to ensure that the centre wasn't only accessed by white middle class able bodied women. The WEVH worked very closely with the Asian community in the South Manchester area of Whalley Range designing bespoke courses and ensuring representation on the Management Committee so that the needs of the community were met. Although the WEVH was based in a Hindu place of worship, women from all religious persuasions joined the WEVH courses and project helping shape the future of the organisation. The WEVH Development Worker's job description also ensured that a large proportion of that particular post was dedicated to outreach work within the community so that accessibility issues were continuously being addressed. Over the years WEVH focused on making its training courses accessible to all women in the Greater Manchester area by working closely with community groups so that they were meeting their needs as well as ensuring their users fed into management committee meetings via sub-groups. Key members of community groups were also encouraged to be part of the WEVH's voluntary management committee ensuring that women from different cultures and backgrounds were represented. The WEVH has worked closely with community groups, umbrella groups and organisations often taking their courses and equipment to them if they couldn't access the WEVH's own facilities. One of its longest standing evening courses was set up for a group of working class women in the Wythenshawe area of Manchester and ran for several years. The WEVH ensured that its premises were fully accessible and secured funding to provide lip speakers, signers, translators, specialist Braille equipment, child minding costs and travel costs. At the end of each course trainees would be asked to provide valuable feedback that would then be assessed and incorporated back into the course curriculum in order to

ensure that trainees' needs were being met. This was part of the WEVH's campaign to provide a positive learning environment for women i.e. a place where women felt comfortable and where their feedback and contributions were valued/taken into consideration and incorporated into future courses and the development of the organisation.

As well as providing education and skills training the WEVH also acted as a focal point for women to influence technology policy, from local and international on-line networks and help women make informed choices about their careers and find gainful employment. The WEVH's strong commitment to equal opportunities and practices and extensive community outreach work ensured that Women in the Greater Manchester area were aware of the facilities available to them.

3.1. Women's EVH Aims and Objectives

The aims of the WEVH are also set out in its Memorandum of Association as required by the Companies Acts 1985 and 1989. These articles relate to the WEVH's provision rather than the organisation and procedures and were set out as follows: -

- The advancement of education among women in Manchester and its environs, in particular in information technology, telematics and allied subjects.
- The relief of poverty amongst said women who through their social and economic circumstance are in need, in particular through the provision of education, training, counseling and advice to enable them to find gainful employment.

- To establish, maintain and manage an IT and telematics resource and training centre for women in the Manchester area.
- To seek to extend access to technology equality to all women so as to empower them in the world of technology and in general and to increase their influence over technological developments.

While the Memorandum of Association outlines the areas of concern of the WEVH, and acts as a guideline for the provision of services, the day-to-day work was informed by a radical interpretation of these writings, which was reflected in the culture of the WEVH. This cultural understanding created the ideology/ethos of the organisation, which in turn shaped its short term and strategic operational practices. This set-up enabled information and ideas from trainees as well as staff and management committee members to inform how the organisation was run on a daily basis as well as influencing the organisation's long-term aims and objectives. This more radical interpretation of the organisation's aims and objectives informed all WEVH training and counseling activities helping and enabling women to make career choices and life changing decisions (Walker 2004).

3.2. European Union Programmes

The Medium Term Action Programme was set up by the European Commission with a specific remit to ensure equal opportunities in the area of training policy for vocational training. Member states were to ensure that women had access to all types and levels of vocational training with a particular emphasis on those professions that were likely to expand in the future (Rees 1998: 61). These 'positive action' programmes established a framework enabling community legislation to be enacted, training projects to be funded and networking facilitated. Equal opportunities in relation to women's position in the labour market were also monitored. Out of these

action programs came the next phase - integration and mainstreaming, which became the focus for the third action programme set up in 1990 that lasted for five years. The main lesson from the Medium Term Action programme was that the equality objective needed to be integrated into all relevant policy areas and that equal opportunities policies in effect must underpin the effectiveness of other policies by being an integral part of them as opposed to some add-on (Rees 1998: 63). The major flaw with these policies was that the problem even at the conceptual stage was seen to be the women themselves in that it was they who needed to be enlightened through campaigns to make them more aware of what was available to them (Henwood 1993; Rees 1998). The third action programme the New Opportunities for Women (NOW) programme provided funds to promote vocational training for women and in particular those who were long-term unemployed and those who wanted to set up their own business. When the WEVH's first round of European funding under the New Opportunities for Women (NOW) programme came to an end new funding was sought under the next European programme LEONARDO DA VINCI which had a specific remit for organisations to develop innovative approaches and training materials. The WEVH applied and secured this funding. The WEVH would spend much of its time searching for and securing funding over the next seventeen years. The European monies enabled the WEVH to create an exciting space for women to learn in and develop good practice but the downside of this was that when these European monies ran out there were no core funding in place to allow the WEVH to continue to develop or deliver its own courses and very soon it was forced to set up partnerships with local Further Education Colleges and deliver courses that were accredited and approved by them. In order for the work of the WEVH to be fully realised it would have been more effective if those projects

funded under the NOW programme were in turn funded to advise other educational establishments at local and national level.

3.3. Training Methodology

Methodology is used not only to describe the teaching and learning methods but also the structures and processes necessary to support a positive learning environment.

The WEVH provided this by taking into consideration the recommendations of the feasibility study (Girbash 1991). The WEVH ensured that all classes at the WEVH were open to just women and were taught by an all female staff team. The WEVH acknowledged the existence of dominant gender technology relations and challenged this through providing women-only space where women could come together in a women only space to discuss women and technology issues. This space provided an environment where women could gain valuable skills and experiences through sharing and interacting with other women and challenging assumptions inherent in dominant gender technology discourse (Girbash 1991: 58; Walker 2004: 80).

Classes were held in small groups of eight to ten to ensure that women received the necessary individual support and attention. The small class size also helped to provide a more intimate and safe environment for women to share ideas, learn from each other, share their experiences and explore the new technologies. A small class size in itself does not ensure that it will be a safe space, being underpinned by the WEVH ethos ensured this, but it is essential for one to one training and group work and in this context it was very supportive due to the intense work done by both the trainers and the trainees themselves (Walker 2004: 66).

Group learning was a very important aspect of WEVH training. Groups provide a support structure for women and a place where they can teach each other and be

taught in an environment that is both informal and co-operative. Women felt supported in their learning, gained confidence through teaching others being in the powerful position of being the knower and were able to share their past and present experiences of technology with other like-minded women who understood and could relate to what they were saying (Walker 2004: 79).

In terms of course content whether it was a short introductory course or a more in-depth advanced course the curriculum ensured that the issues relating to the wider aims and objectives of the WEVH were incorporated into the learning programme. Discussions relating to gender and technology issues enabled trainees to obtain an overview of where they themselves and women in general were situated. (Walker 2004: 87)

Wherever possible course materials were designed by the WEVH to reflect the needs and interests of the women who were using them. These materials, activities and projects were also designed to incorporate the aims and objectives of the organisation. A mixture of training methods, including verbal explanation, group work and discussion were utilised making lessons interesting and ensuring that each individual woman's learning requirement was catered for. This type of learning can be done in small groups. The WEVH also placed a heavy emphasis on support from the initial contact stage right through to after the woman had completed her course. An in-depth assessment would be given at the recruitment stage and after the course had ended the trainee would be given further support to establish what their needs were. This was an essential part of the methodology and ensured that women didn't drop out of their course, that they made successful progress and that they were encouraged to make suitable choices for the future. (Walker 2004: 94)

3.3.1. Practical Support

The WEVH provided financial and practical support to women who were trying to overcome the barriers faced by women when trying to access training and education.

This included: -

- Childcare expenses being paid directly to the woman so that she could choose whom to pay to look after her children. Having this money meant that women were not indebted to friends or family if they chose these to be their child's minder and actually put them in the more powerful position of being able to pay for work. This was particularly useful for a great number of the WEVH's Asian trainees where family members often provided childcare so this ensured that women could actually take up the training.
- Travel costs being paid to women on receipt of a travel ticket or they could claim car mileage to reimburse whoever drove them to their training course. Again this was empowering because they could actually pay someone in exchange for a lift to the WEVH. This again ensured that good number of Asian women, whose husbands or family members wanted to escort them to the WEVH could attend the courses without having to worry about the costs or that they couldn't take public transport.
- Flexible training programmes were organised around school hours and holidays. Classes were held during school term from 10am-3pm enabling women with school age children to attend. In some cases classes were also held at local community centres.
- The WEVH had fully accessible premises and provided signers, lip speakers, and translators. It also had specially adapted software and hardware to support women.

- Day and evening course were available as well and full-time and part-time courses.

A range of beginner and more advanced course were available to cater for the needs of women at various stages in their learning. Drop-in classes were also available for women who found it hard to commit to an on-going course. Through group discussions and individual one to one sessions using Assessment of Prior Learning (APEL) women were encouraged to look at their previous work experiences and talk about what this actually involved in a detailed and constructive way. The process involved women exploring their life journeys using techniques encouraging them to identify and value previously unacknowledged skills, work and abilities enabling them to contextualise them and see them as part of their on-going development and applicable to their current training and future working lives.

The WEVH ran a number of projects one of which was ‘Multimedia for Women in the Cultural Industries’ (MUWIC) which was initially piloted at Manchester Metropolitan University in 1997 and then adapted, further developed and run by the WEVH from 1998. MUWIC provided women with a foundation level introduction to web design and multimedia production and included training in Internet and email; image creation and processing; website building and design plus HTML.

The aims of the course were to train women in new media, business application and project planning skills and to provide a forum for discussion and networking. At the end of their six-month course women received a nationally recognised qualification and their work was showcased at a venue in Manchester city centre. New media employers/workers, funders, academics and local businesses would attend this event.

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter gives an in depth description of the WEVH, the concept behind it and why it was set up in the Manchester area. It helps us understand the policies and practices of an organisation that trained thousands of women in new media and ICT. It shows its aims and objectives and how these were transformed into working practices that were monitored to ensure that its trainees were both being shaped and actively shaping the organisation thus ensuring that their needs were being met. Background information of the European programs that the WEVH was funded under are highlighted and the policies behind them. The WEVH's unique training methodology is explained showing that training can be about the empowerment of women and still be of industry standard.

Chapter 4

4. Literature Survey

4.0. Introduction

This literature survey chapter will seek to explore a broad base of feminist literature relating to factors affecting women's career trajectories including schooling, further/higher education and the voluntary sector. As well as looking at what influences women's careers it will also look at both the work cycle, how networking affects this and also the factors that limit women's career choices. Conflict is a particular area of difficulty primarily because the conflict that women experience is so invisible in that they are not allowed to even voice their concerns in a post feminist era where such issues are deemed to have already been solved.

Over the last few decades much has been written about gender and technology to the extent that some feminists including Merete Lie (2003) and Judy Wajcman (2004) have asked whether we still need more research on women and technology. Given that much of the feminist gender and technology research has historically been motivated by a desire for political change (Wajcman 2004) the persistence of gender inequalities has led to the questioning of the type of research that is required and which concepts we should be focusing on (Lie 2003; Wajcman 2004). Following Wajcman's suggestion there has been a shift away from research sites such as consumption, identity and representation with researchers focusing on production and work (Diamond and Whitehouse 2007; Moore et al 2005). This has led Sally Wyatt (2008) to conclude that '*Revisiting these sites of gender and technology*

production and regulation may not only generate important empirical material but also develop new theoretical and political ideas' (Wyatt 2008: 13).

This study offers a unique insight into the lives of women working in the new media sector who have undergone new media training at a women-only technology centre in an area where there has been little research. Previous studies have either focused on women-only training (Dyson 1999; Walker 2004, 2005; Ellen & Herman 2005) or on the new media industry (Flew 2002, 2004; Gill 2007; Hesmondhalgh 2007; O'Connor 2007; Banks and Milestone 2011). The study is concerned with women's experiences of the new media industry and how their training has helped shape their understanding of these experiences. The new media workers discussed are mainly freelancers. They are in the main content creators, women who work in web design, multimedia authoring, web broadcasting, digital arts and design although some have moved into more managerial roles having done the aforementioned work in previous jobs. Although a lot has been written on gender and technology there is still a lack of empirical studies on women's experiences of working with technology and even less on gender and new media. Gill's critical study of the new media industry focuses on gender inequalities in new media work. Interestingly Gill found that the new media *'myth conceals, obscures, or renders unsayable: chronic insecurity, low pay, long hours, and other problems associated with a shift to the individualisation of risk. It has also been concerned to use the evidence from the survey and interviews with new media workers to hold up to closer scrutiny the idea that new media is an egalitarian field, free of sexism'* (Gill 2002: 25).

The long hours culture also means that women with childcare responsibilities seek employment in the public and voluntary sectors teaching rather than creating so that

they can be at home in time for their children returning from school. Ellen and Herman (2005: 9) also found that women had often chosen to work in the public and voluntary sectors where working hours could fit in with childcare and family life.

Gill's study offers an interesting account of the diversity of backgrounds and the motivations of people working in new media. Her report highlights the wonderful passion and creativity of the people working in the area and also questions the '*work-life balance (a problematic notion, but still), and about the sustainability (in terms of health and relationships, for example) of intense - sometimes bulimic - working patterns*' (Gill 2007: 44). Gibson and Kong (2005) also noted that people working in the creative industries are often not driven by career development but by '*a personal desire to engage with the affective, emotive, cathartic dimensions of creative pursuits such as music, writing and painting.*' (Gibson and Kong 2005: 544)

Amy Wharton (2005) offers some useful frameworks to classify social practices that organise gender and also give a useful working definition of gender. Following Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin (1999: 192), Wharton sees gender as a '*system of social practices, this system creates and maintains gender distinctions and it organises relations of inequality on the basis of [these distinctions].*' This enables Wharton to suggest that '*gender involves the creation of both differences and inequalities.*'

Wharton's definition of gender has three important features. Firstly, '*gender is as much a process as a fixed state*' (Wharton 2005: 9). This allows us to see gender as being '*continually produced or reproduced*' or as 'enacted' or 'done'. Secondly, gender is seen as occurring at all levels of society and is expressed as a '*system*' of '*practices that are far-reaching, interlocked, and that exist independently of*

individuals' (Wharton 2005: 9). This second understanding allows us to show how the workplace as well as other social processes such as 'interaction' embody and reproduce gender. The third feature of this definition is that, '*as a principle of social organisation, gender is one critical dimension upon which social resources are distributed*' (Wharton 2005: 9). This however does not necessarily mean that '*gender differentiation must lead to gender inequality*' (Wharton 2005: 9).

Wharton (2005) offers three frameworks that correspond to her working definition of gender. These frameworks enable Wharton to categorize sociological writing on the social practices that organise gender. With the individualist approach the 'sociological action' in relation to gender '*resides in individuals - their personalities, traits and emotions etc*' (Wharton 2005: 8). Socialisation is the social practice mostly associated with this framework or '*the processes through which individuals take on gendered qualities*' (Wharton 2005: 31). Wharton's interactional approaches differ from the individualist approach in that gender '*is created through social interaction and is inherently contextual in its impact*' (Wharton 2005: 8). Finally Wharton's institutional approaches, in themselves also '*contextual*' in nature see gender as being '*embedded in the structures and practices of organizations and social institutions, which appear on the surface to be gender-neutral*' (Wharton 2005: 16). Wharton uses the term '*contextual*' to describe the institutional approaches to describe the external nature of the social practices associated with these two frameworks (Wharton 2005: 64).

The research for this study will be placed in the interactional and institutional frameworks with regards to gender. These approaches allow for gender to be seen as

a more relational term whereas the individualist approach is more concerned with how *'people's personal characteristics - traits, behaviours, identities - are shaped by sex category'* (Wharton 2005: 40). The major flaw of the individualist approach is that it sees women and men as homogenous groups. The differences between women and men are seen to be far greater than the differences within each sex category. This viewpoint has been strongly criticised because of its focus on sex differences being the major constraint on gender. Hollander and Howard (2000: 340) argue that focusing on group differences *'may act as self-fulfilling prophecies, predisposing researchers to overlook their preconceptions.'* This makes gender stereotyping all too easy. Research undertaken on sex differences *'often obscures the fact that different almost always means unequal'* Hollander and Howard (2000: 340) and leads them to argue that an imbalance of power is really what is being shown in these differences.

These gender 'differences' ever present in the female/male dichotomy with the male and masculine traits being seen as being superior to females and femininity. This hierarchical binary has been explored by (Rommes and Faulkner 2003; Willis 1991; Spender 1995). Drawing on empirical evidence Rommes and Faulkner (2003) argue that gender binaries have two significant features: -

'Firstly they are usually framed as dichotomous or mutually exclusive: the 'masculine' side is by definition not 'feminine' and vice versa. Thus the nerd stereotype says you cannot be into being technical as well as being social. Second, there is usually a hierarchy implicit, in which the 'masculine' side of the binary is valued over the 'feminine' side hence the downplaying of the

computing skills of computer enthusiast girls.' (Rommes and Faulkner 2003:

5)

Interactional and institutional approaches to gender see gender as a '*major social organising principle that sorts people into two separate but unequal groups*' (Foster 1999: 433). The idea that gender is an attribute, a variable, a static entity and/or a role assigned to individuals based on one's natural sex category is rejected by feminist gender theorists (Foster 1999). Instead, gender is seen as both a social process and a set of social practices that is constituted at the many different levels of social organisation in our society and that change according to both time and cultural context. This understanding enables research which concentrates on the links between identity, culture and social structure, on the histories of gender, on the everyday social practices that produce and re-produce gender and on the consequences of the social construction of unequal difference Hacking (1999) that affect women's every day lives. Drawing on the work of Lamphere et al (1993), Foster (1999) states that such a theoretical perspective informs empirical work, allowing for '*an analysis of both the differences and commonalities among women without taking 'women' as either a homogenized or decontextualised analytic*' (Foster 1999: 438). Von Hellens et al (2004: 5) explore binaries relating to the skills and attributes in IT work. They used Giddens' Structuration Theory (1984) to analyse their interview data demonstrating the dualisms identified that represent skills and attributes as either/or propositions associated with gender, such an attention to detail 'feminine' and assertiveness 'masculine'. Such work looks at gender in context, viewing it as a relational term and as a social practice that has differential impacts on women's lives across particular times and spaces. To argue that gender is 'socially constructed' and contextual does not necessarily imply that

the gendering of the social world has no ‘real’ effect. Foster (1999) states, *‘When gender theorists argue that the category ‘woman’ is socially produced, they are in no way arguing that such social constructions do not have very real consequences for people’s lives’* (Foster 1999: 441).

Moore et al (2005) show how, in relation to gender and technology in the workplace, there are two approaches that can be mapped onto Wharton’s frameworks, albeit partially. The ‘liberal’ feminist approach focuses on the exclusion of women from ICTs due to access issues at various stages of their lives and in different areas e.g. home, school and work. The ‘liberal’ approach also highlights the under-representation of women in Higher Education courses and within the IT industry. This approach is responsible for much of the research on the conditions of work for women in the IT sector, including pay and monitoring women’s career trajectories. The liberal feminist approach to the problem of women in new media/ICT is typified by the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) and Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) discourses (Henwood 1996). The main criticisms of the WISE approach were that it pandered to the needs of industry without ever really challenging either the heteronormative set up of the industry itself, the male orientated courses or the wider issue of our heteronormative patriarchal culture. Faulkner (2006) recommends: -

‘Avoid appealing to gender stereotypes in recruitment campaigns. These should ‘speak to’ the enthusiasm about maths, science and practical technology, which would be men, and women engineers share. And at the

same time, they should make visible the range of masculinities and femininities amongst actual engineers. ' (Faulkner 2006: 14)

WISE and SET's main agenda was to improve access to ICT. Their strategy was to encourage more women into new media/ICT courses (and more generally SET courses) at all levels of education, campaigning for better Equal Opportunities and Managing Diversity legislation and to kick start initiatives to advance the lot of women in ICT and more generally SET. ICT employers and the UK economy would also benefit through the greater participation of women in the industry (E-Skills/Gartner 2004).

There have been many criticisms of the liberal feminist approach in general terms and in terms of actions advocated to address gender imbalances in the workplace (Cockburn 1986). These include its tendency towards technological determinism, given that it leaves the issue of 'technology' largely unchallenged. The individualism of the liberal feminist approach to the problem of women and technology has also been highlighted as problematic, situating the problem as it does with women themselves in not realising the potential of technologies, their failure to properly engage with these technologies in the home and workplace settings and their lack of awareness of the numerous career options open through IT. Moore et al (2005a: 4) and Clegg and Trayburn (1999) suggest that there is more to the women and computing problem than getting more women into the IT industry and into good posts, although they do stress that this is of course very important.

Moore et al (2005: 4) see the '*contextualisation of the women and computing 'problem'*', to be the way forward because it enables us to look at the workplace as a

site for study. Their research highlights how unsuitable it is for many women both in a practical sense with the long hours and presenteeism (Simpson 1998) culture, the instability of the IT market and the masculine culture of the industry. Their findings showed that part-time workers were viewed negatively (DTI 2004) as was part-time work (Epstein et al 1999; Hakim 1991). This has led Moore et al (2005) to suggest that these aspects need to change before some women will be able to work comfortably in the IT work environment. Moore et al (2005) go on to suggest that it is the IT industry that needs to adapt rather than women and older workers adapting to the culture of the IT industry. They believe that the IT industry would benefit from broadening its appeal to a more diverse workforce (Women and Equality Unit, Platman and Taylor 2004, cited in Moore et al 2005: 5).

Moore et al (2005: 5) explore the difficulties in the contemporary academic climate of post-structuralism and postmodernism, whereby the categories of ‘experience’, ‘reality’ and ‘women’ are being questioned. What it means to speak of ‘woman’ as a category is at issue. Pini (2001) focusing on the ‘erasure’ of women from (male-stream) academic explorations of contemporary rave/club/dance music cultures and histories states: -

‘Perhaps one of the most pressing questions facing post-structuralism feminist theory and politics today, concerns how to speak of ‘women’ and ‘women’s experiences’ without denying differences between women, and without resorting to a form of essentialism.’ (Pini 2001: 63)

McRobbie (1997b) states that only by acknowledging both the partial and situatedness of women's experiential accounts can they then be taken seriously. This research aims to draw on the partial and situated knowledges approach of a politics of difference with regards to writing on 'women' suggested by Haraway (1991) and McRobbie (1997a and 1997b) enabling an exploration of women's experiences whilst acknowledging the problems with liberal and standpoint feminism. Haraway suggests a politics of difference can emphasise that '*experience like difference is about contradictory and necessary connection*' (Haraway 1991: 104) whilst avoiding the homogenising and appropriating effects that (gender) classifications can often lead to. Moore et al acknowledge that, '*with the troubling of 'gender' and of 'technology' it can be difficult to give voice (and weight) to women's experiences*' (Moore et al 2005: 6).

This study will approach technology in a similar fashion to gender and will concern itself with the more radical accounts presented by the sociology of science and technology (SST) and feminist studies of technology (Cockburn 1983, 1985; Faulkner 2001; Wajcman 1991, 2000). Liberal accounts of technology are influenced by the fact that it is '*generally 'black-boxed' in that the human (or more usually male) work that goes into its production is obscured by technological determinism which separates out technological 'development' from the 'social' sphere and produces technologies (and their 'effects') as 'inevitable' and usually desirable (as 'progress')*' (Moore et al 2005: 6). Moore et al (2005) go onto explain: -

“The social’ is thus viewed as an entirely separate entity to the technological tsunamis that continuously swamp it. Such views of technology, which tend to leave the status quo undisturbed, give little or no space to the discursive co-

construction of gender and technology. It is in the nexus of this co-construction that science; engineering and technology (SET) can so unswervingly be produced as a 'masculine' domain.' (Moore et al 2005: 6)

In contrast to a technological determinist position, but not without its critics (Akrich 1992; Albertson and Diken 2001) social constructionism argues that our understandings of technologies are produced through gendered discourses and social interactions. Social constructionists argue that the way we see technologies is culturally and historically embedded, and profoundly gendered. Gill (2007) found that the promise of technology is still very much in the minds of her interviewees: -

'But some tied this to a belief in and enthusiasm for innovation - built on a sense that the 'Internet revolution' (as one respondent called it) is still unfinished. Some people stressed that this allowed huge possibilities for creativity: 'the only limit is our imagination', as one man put. 'We are learning, making it up, creating it'.' (Gill 2007: 15)

4.1. Debates on Gender in the Workplace

4.1.1. Career Decisions

In her studies of new media workers Gill (2002, 2007) found that its youth, dynamism and creativity were what drew people to the sector as well as working at your own pace without having a boss to answer to or direct you. They, in particular

men, also liked the street culture edginess to it. Gill however takes issues with Leadbeter and Oakley's (1999) upbeat account: -

'Cultural entrepreneurs opt for independence because it allows them to work in the way they want, which they would find hard to justify within a larger organisation. This mode of working is central to the way they generate and apply their creativity to commercial ends. The Independents are generally highly motivated and have a strong work ethic, although they do not follow the traditional workday or week. They accept their work will be judged on performance, in competition with their peers. People are usually only as good as their last project. They work in a highly competitive environment, in which fashions and technologies can change very rapidly.' Leadbeter and Oakley (1999: 24)

Gill (2002, 2007) shows that Leadbeter and Oakley's account doesn't tell the full story and completely ignores some of the harsher realities of this 'cool' lifestyle. What it misses is the more profound shift represented by project-based careers towards an individualisation of risk that operates at many levels. Individuals must become entirely self-governing and bear the costs of all their training and professional development including insurance, social security, sick pay, and maternity leave. They must also take responsibility for finding future work and for managing gaps between projects.

Laufer (2000) has highlighted the phenomenon of 'total availability', whereby presenteeism is widespread, and believed to be a demonstration of a worker's

commitment to their role and their organisation. When 'total availability' is praised and expected in the workplace discrimination against women and in particular mothers can occur. Gerwitz and Lindsey (2000) respondents found trying to combine their work and life outside of the workplace particularly difficult. Time pressures and perceived 'lack of commitment' in the absence of 'total availability' worked against women with dependents. A senior manager from this survey said, *'I tend not to hire people with young families'* (Gerwitz and Lindsey 2000: 12).

Moore et al (2005b: 7) argue *'that for women in the ICT sector, 'flexible working' may amount to little more than being part of an 'always-on' culture which undermines rather than enhances family and leisure time.'* Kodz (2002) identified a so-called non-gender specific 'take-up gap' with regards to flexible working initiatives: -

'In spite of the efforts made by employers to introduce flexible working employees have been reluctant to adopt the new work-life balance initiatives possibly due to the fear of hindering their career prospects. Heavy workloads, entrenched long-hours culture and presenteeism have been identified as creating barriers to 'flexibility' however defined. Managers and co-workers reported observing unfavourable attitudes amongst co-workers who believed they had been 'left at work to carry the can' and 'deliver on team projects'.' (Kodz et al 2002: 46)

Moore et al (2005) suggest that if we are to move towards flexible working then *'we need to concentrate more on the lived experiences and the organisational contexts of women'* and look to Dex and Scheibl (2002) who *'classify three broad categories of*

flexible working practices, namely holistic, selective and resistant'. According to their research with SMEs in a variety of sectors, 'holistic' organisations centered upon individual 'balance sheets', and multi-skilled teams with a 'flexible working' point system for all employers. 'Selective' organisations on the other hand, focused upon the 'business case' for flexibility, and offered only a handful of employees the possibility of flexibility. In both of these classifications types line managers acknowledged the need to find 'flexible' solutions and drew on personal experience of work-life issues. Moore et al found that: -

'In Dex and Scheibl (2002) 'resistant' category, line-managers reported little personal experience of work-life issues and the organisations' predominately male workforce made few demands regarding flexibility. Interestingly the line-managers of the final category were predominately men whilst the line-managers of the 'holistic' and 'selective' categories were predominately women. Whilst wishing to avoid essentialist arguments here, it is interesting to note the differing outlooks of line-managers within the various organisations dependent on gender and past/personal experience.' (Moore et al 2005b: 7)

Gatrell (2005) found that women's working patterns were constantly being measured against those of their male counterparts and were therefore always feeling lacking in some way. This is because the '*normative basis for working arrangements*' (Hopfl, Hornby-Atkinson 2000: 137) is based on the conventional, masculine and Parsonian notion of bodily presence at work for extended periods, in a cultural context, which includes 'presenteeism' (Collinson and Collinson 2004; Lewis and Cooper 1999). The 'erasing of differences' in order to fit in with others at work (Puwar 2004) is

difficult for mothers who work part-time, because these women cannot sustain the same level of embodied presence in the workplace as male managers. Through their child-related bodily absences from the office, mothers working part-time, or *'fractionally', are marked out from the 'ideal' - and continuously present - male worker.'* This would appear to be yet another example of what Rees (1998) would term women having to 'march' to the male 'stride' and that it is the 'stride' rather than the march that is the problem (Rees 1998: 194).

Gatrell (2005) found that when women did try to create a good work-life balance by combining professional and managerial roles with part-time work the work offered to them by the organisation is often instigated as a short-term solution due to problems regarding the recruitment and retention of female staff and that they do little to acknowledge, or to accommodate mothers' long term career ambitions. This short-termism is problematic in that it means that companies don't actually get around to re-assessing their *'working practices and inherent assumptions that sustain counterproductive behaviours and values, such as the over-valuing of visible time at the workplace'* (Lewis and Cooper 2005).

Moore et al (2005) findings showed that 59% of their respondents believed that they had the same chance as promotion as their male colleagues, with only 36% disagreeing and 5% choosing 'Do Not Know'. The results weren't without ambiguity as 73% of the participants had a male line manager, reiterating that there is a gender imbalance occurring at some stage of the progression process. Liff and Ward (2001) argue that the under-representation of females in senior management roles may be explained by the promotional process and the time investment required for a senior

management role. Liff and Ward (2001) argue that personality and behavioural characteristics are important to succeed alongside an embracing of the presenteeism culture surrounding management roles. Their research found that it was common for both men and women to identify the same issues in their home and work lives although how they dealt with this though was quite different. Whereas men found it difficult that they did not see enough of their children, women were running themselves ragged trying to manage parenthood and working life (Liff and Ward 2001).

An interviewee in Moore et al (2005a) study gave a very good example of this, *‘There is an increase in considering women as not being “good mums” and men being “better fathers” so it looks like we are considered having lost the ability to be mums and men have acquired the ability to look after children’* (Moore et al 2005a: 14). Moore et al (2005a) point out that *‘again we see here the conflicts and very ‘real’ consequences generated by essentialist versions of ‘woman’ (and ‘man’), in which women who excel in one sphere of life (career, public) ‘cannot’ simultaneously excel, or supposedly even ‘cope’, in another (career, private/domestic)’* (Moore et al 2005a: 14).

Liff and Ward’s (2001) work can be related to these findings in that of the 76 (out of a possible 111) respondents who indicated their working patterns, 72% had full-time roles (with an additional 12% working full-time flexi-time). This is significant given that 59% of the respondents had no children. Is this indicative that for women in IT full-time positions are incompatible with raising a family? In examining changes in family and working practices (Gatrell 2005) identified that despite current government work-life balance initiatives highly qualified working women with

children are suffering hidden discrimination from their employers. This is highlighted by Moore et al (2005a) study where an interviewee states, *“It’s all very well a company having a work life policy or suggesting that they will try to support part-time/flexible working. What is needed is for them to actually act on this and prove they support it. I cannot see much evidence of this at present. I would hate to leave IT but in due course I hope to start a family and this will definitely take the highest priority.”* (Moore et al 2005a: 15) Unfortunately this respondent’s concerns are supported by (Gatrell 2005) who found that organisations in many different sectors are still reluctant to employ working mothers. Ellen and Herman (2005: 19) also found that women were more likely to take up positions in the public and voluntary sector due to balancing childcare and family commitments with their working lives.

An interviewee in Moore et al (2005a) study thought that, *“Too many decisions and discussions took place down the pub. I have worked in IT over the last 20 years and still had to put up with people commenting on how unusual it was to see women writing software.”*(Moore et al 2005a: 16)

Gill’s study of new media workers showed that despite feeling as though they had very little control over their working environment workers still remained upbeat and optimistic: -

‘It was striking to note that many participants found it difficult to imagine their future in new media. The insecurity and precariousness of the work contributed to making the future unthinkable. Despite this, the enthusiasm for new media was palpable and undiminished.’ (Gill 2007: 8)

Banks and Milestone (2011) found that male managers in the new media sector were still having difficulty in understanding that women were capable of having the same technical competences as men: -

‘By and large women were only seen as being able to counterbalance male innovation and creativity by taking on supporting roles that befitted their ‘natural’ gender attributes. Male managers repeatedly denied that women possessed legitimate expertise in creative or technological production.’

(Banks and Milestone 2011: 34)

Henwood (1993) criticised the ‘women and technology’ approach for containing elements of both biological and technological determinism in that technology is taken as a ‘given’ and women are seen to possess the ‘feminine’ skills that are perceived to be in demand by the IT industry. *‘It could equally be said that once these newly-discovered attributes of flexibility, intuition etc. are revealed and become sought-after skills in computing, men will be the first in line to demonstrate their competence in these fields’* (Henwood 1993: 42). In a later study Henwood (1998) found that *‘feminine subjectivities are being produced alongside masculine ones as if one somehow complements the other’* (Henwood 1998: 10) thus mirroring the heteronormative culture of wider society.

4.1.1.1. Career Influences and Limiting Factors

Moore et al (2005a: 18) provided an insight into how women felt about the workplace when questioned about what characteristics they perceived were needed in

order to progress in the ICT industry. Respondents gave a whole range of skills and experiences that they thought were required to make it in the industry. These included, *'determination, logical, persistence, up to date knowledge, technical bravado, enthusiasm, confidence and self belief and lastly a good brain and the ability to mix with even the strangest people'*. This focus on individual skills rather than offering a political overview was very much in keeping with the responses from non-WEVH respondents.

Bank and Milestone (2011) found that the attitudes of male managers in the new media sector was very problematic in that essentialist views of women were still at play when it came to what criteria was being used to employ female workers.

Women's primary role as carers is influencing how women choose to work in that they are rejecting the long hours culture demanded by the industry.

Ellen and Herman (2005) found that *'women's routes into ICT work were generally not straightforward - only one of the women in the study chose an IT career straight from school - the rest had 'fallen into IT' or come into the sector through different routes'* (Ellen and Herman 2005, cited in Webster 2007: 7). Again, this is very much in keeping with the findings from the new media respondents in this study.

Research in the ICT industry has been very useful when looking at the new media, as there are so many overlays and commonalities. IT work continues to be produced through gendered discourse, routine activities, gendered interactions and gendered institutions, as a 'masculinised' domain in which women must 'fit it' (Von Hellens et al 2004, cited in Moore et al 2005a: 18; Banks and Milestone 2011). Liff and Ward (2001: 25) stress the need to be *'keen and ambitious and have the right people backing you (not blocking you)'*.

Faulkner (2000) states that a woman cannot 'really' be a 'woman' with social skills if she is also a woman with technical skills as these are (supposedly) mutually exclusive, one being 'female', and the other 'male'. A woman may have social skills but she worries that these may not be 'enough' to over-ride her primary identity as a 'techie'. Here we see how the very detail of (technical) knowledge and practice is gendered in complex and often contradictory ways (Faulkner 2000: 14).

Banks and Milestone (2011) argue that for some of the women in their study recognition of their career dreams and passions are an essential part of their very essence and therefore we *'should not too easily discount the ways in which some of the women we encountered appeared to derive a genuine sense of personal autonomy, creative fulfillment and social rewards from pursuing their dream career. We recommend that the socially progressive potentials of this entrance of women into reflexive work need to be further explored'* (Banks and Milestone 2011: 15).

Gill (2002) found that despite the volume of new media work being done by these workers the earnings from this work was low and contrasted sharply with stereotypes of 'PC bedroom millionaires' and with general perceptions about the marketability of IT skills. The low incomes from new media work meant that all but a few of the workers surveyed were supplementing their income with other kinds of work which in the main was teaching in further or higher education settings or offering courses in the skills/packages that they were fluent in themselves. Another interesting point to this is that it was mainly women who were supplementing their income in this way (Gill 2002: 16).

Gill found that reported gender differences started at school, with women claiming much fewer opportunities to use computers, and describing situations in which boys

'took over' the computing facilities, often intimidating female teachers. Inequalities persisted once women entered the field of new media even when women had equivalent levels of IT skills to their male contemporaries. Women also got significantly fewer work contracts, and those, which they did get, like Ellen and Herman (2005: 19), Gill found were often for public sector or voluntary organisations rather than with commercial organisations (which went disproportionately to men). Women earned less money for their new media work than men because they secured less work. This led many women to become de facto part-time workers in their chosen field due to the need to earn a living. Women were also much more likely than men to work from home, despite having as strong a preference as their male peers for working from a rented studio or workspace. Moore et al (2005: 11) found that a *'collapse' of work into home-life spaces may actually undermine the possibility of work-life balance, an undermining which may be experienced differently depending on a person's gender.'*

Moore et al (2005) found that there were problems with home/teleworking for the small proportion of women from their sample who chose to undertake this as a result of their caring responsibilities. *'The opportunity to remain at home to work for an organisation whilst having more time for home and family ignores the fact that these activities may be mutually exclusive leading to increased conflict between work and home'* (Wilson and Greenhill 2004: 12). Gill (2007) found that her interviewees *'also experienced challenges relating to the isolation of working freelance, and the lack of affordable workspaces'* (Gill 2007: 8).

Gill's (2002) survey findings also challenged the academic and journalistic speculation, which suggests cyberspace or virtual space may be changing social relations: -

'As Andy Pratt (2000) has argued, contact with other new media workers is important not only to combat isolation, but it is also a vital source of information about new and changing technologies, problem solving, and future work opportunities. In this study, 95% of respondents reported that making contact with others doing similar work was a key part of their working lives.' (Gill 2002: 17)

The ability to choose a workspace is also an indicator of flexible working practices, with working from home being seen as very desirable for professional workers - particularly women. Gill (2002: 17; 2007: 25) findings show that new media workers mostly preferred to work from a rented studio or workshop in the cultural quarter of the city.

4.1.1.2. The Work Cycle

Gill (2002, 2007) showed that just as the informality of the industry was experienced as both attractive and problematic then so too was the flexibility of the new media career. The notion of flexibility was not something that these new media workers actually experienced as something that worked in their favour. Many projects had extremely tight deadlines that resulted in intense, round-the-clock work for a short period followed by several weeks with no new media work at all. This pattern was the norm for workers in Gill's study and has been described elsewhere as the

'bulimic career' (Pratt 2000). Gill's study revealed the real nature of this type of work, highlighting '*the problems of the project based working life, which include poverty, isolation and, above all, insecurity.*' Gill (2002: 9)

Gill (2002: 10) notes that the alternative 'take' on gender within these discussions '*is to argue that women are portfolio workers par excellence - 'that their skills and experiences (e.g. multi-tasking) make them ideally suited to the project based enterprises of the future.*' (cf Frank 1999, cited in Gill 2002: 10) The entry of women into the workforce through small start-up companies in the cultural sector is also regarded as both socially valuable and economically beneficial by contemporary policymakers. The British and European governments see women as the 'solution' to the skills shortage afflicting the industry (Moore et al 2004; Henwood 1996). At a national level the government are keen to stress that although '*women account for less than a quarter of the information and communication technology workforce and this proportion is on the decline. The key to addressing the skills shortage, now and in the future, is to encourage more women to enter the ICT sector.*' (Baroness Margaret Jay, MP, Minister for Women November 2000, cited in Gill 2002: 10). '*The British Government's Women's Unit also expends considerable energy promoting the vision of the women multi-tasking with images of mothers expertly balancing a baby and a computer and personal testimonies of women who went into IT and have 'never looked back''*' (Gill 2001, cited in Gill 2002: 10).

Gill (2002), also highlights that little attention has been devoted to examining new media work and workers: -

'New media workers are invoked rhetorically all the time, but rarely studied, and, in place of analysis, two diametrically opposed stereotypes have

emerged: one greeting new media work as the ultimate in freedom and control for workers; the other painting a picture of new media workers as downtrodden victims of the move to more flexible kinds of work (Christopherson et al 1999). Neither one is accurate or adequate. ' (Gill 2002: 11)

One clear finding of Gill's (2002) study concerned the irrelevance of traditional means of finding work for these new media workers. Informal networks are the key source of information for work with this group. In addition, more than half the women surveyed and nearly three-quarters of the men said that they created their own work.

In Susan Christopherson's (1999) study of new media workers in New York, her respondents were spending an average of 20 hours per week updating their skills and knowledge or in just trying to secure their next project. Gill (2002; 2007) also found that her respondents had to spend significant amounts of time and money simply to maintain a 'steady-state' to stay skilled in a rapidly changing technological environment and to keep apprised of developing work opportunities.

Moore et al (2005b: 6) found that it is not uncommon for women to work at home during evenings or weekend, e.g. when the children are in bed, either reading e-mails or continuing an unfinished job or working on a training programme. Long hours, including availability during evenings and weekends, are a problem for working mothers (in particular for those without a supporting partner) with few companies showing any support for women whilst their children are young (WWW-ICT Project

Report 2001: 17). These findings were very much in keeping with those of Banks and Milestone (2011) where new media company managers were very keen to employ men in *'creative roles for only they were perceived to have the skills, flexibility and lack of familial responsibilities necessary to fit into the required long hours work pattern'* (Banks and Milestone 2011: 9). Their findings add weight to Adkins assertion that *'In the new media sector - the very essence, it is widely argued, of reflexive and emancipated cultural production - we can find evidence to corroborate the notion that cultural workplaces are increasingly dependent on the re-traditionalized 'incitement of family relations of appropriation'* (Adkins 1999: 132).

It is interesting to look at strategies that have focussed on exposing and transforming the dualistic nature of dominant gender-technology relations (Stepulevage 1997: 33). Hetero-gendered dualism is seen to play a major part in defining and promoting what is 'normal' and 'acceptable' from the conceptual through to the practical and has added another dimension to our understanding of how these relations are maintained. Normative heterosexual politics in the workplace, place of education or training are seen to reinforce those of society and vice versa thus providing a dualism set on maintaining dominant hetero-gendered relations in both the private and public areas of our lives. Real and lasting change is seen to be achievable only if there is an acknowledgement of the existence of these relations and the many constraints that they place on us as individuals and as a society.

Gill's (2002) study showed that although for much of the time respondents work on their own, they came together with other freelancers in 'project networks' (Jones

1996) to work on particular outputs. In these situations they almost always got the opportunity to participate via a personal contact. These collaborations were described as team works without organisational hierarchy, where tasks were more important than roles. The fluidity of roles was identified by many participants as a key attraction of this way of working with others.

Another interesting finding of Gill's research was that most of the respondents said that their worked in some cases involved working on two or three projects simultaneously perhaps working with a team producing a CD ROM two days a week, working on web site design for a company one day a week and spending some of the remaining time on their own digital arts project. The figures did show that women tend to work on fewer projects than their male counterparts. Gill (2002)

Gill's (2002) workers included only a small number of people who said they had children with none of those being women. There could be a number of reasons but their findings do show that it would be extremely difficult for a woman to combine child-rearing with a new media career given the way that work is organized without the support of a child-minder who would be *'willing to mimic the intense stop-go work patterns and long hours, or a radical restructuring of heterosexual gender relations. Images of women feeding or playing with contented babies, while simultaneously working at their home computer terminal would be regarded with hilarity by the women in this study and bear no relationship to their experiences of the demands of work in new media'* (Gill 2002: 23).

Gill also found that new media workers' perceptions of securing projects are borne out by evidence from those who allocated project contracts. Even within the more mainstream, stable parts of high-tech industries contracts are increasingly offered to those who have informal connections to the company or who are recommended by an insider. The vice president of Sun Microsystems informs us that *'only 2% of the jobs we fill are from resumes. Most of the jobs in our company are filled by referrals from other employees'* (Christopherson et al 1999, cited in Gill 2002: 21).

'The practice of hiring staff or issuing contracts raises concerns for equal opportunities, concerns that can be difficult to contest or even discuss because of the lack of transparency in the process. It challenges new media's view of itself as both meritocratic and egalitarian because contracts are given on the basis of informal connections or personal recommendation rather than on the result of fair competition. This may disadvantage many men as well as women, but women are likely to be disproportionately affected because of what Suzanne Franks (1999) calls Hansard's law - namely, the clubbier the atmosphere the more it will discriminate against women' (Gill 2002: 21). One woman from Gill's survey gave her thoughts on this matter. Having been initially attracted by the informal and non-hierarchical nature of the field, she longed for the formal and rigidly hierarchical organisations in which the structures of status and authority are clear, and criteria for hiring and promotion are transparent and publicly available: *'Give me a formal hierarchy any day over the fake democracy and pseudo-equality of this work!'* (Gill 2002)

4.1.1.3. Networking

Networking is crucial for most if not all working patterns/styles. In her review of empirical work on human and social capital factors in the advancement of women to management positions, Tharenou (1999) states that lack of social capital i.e. the ways in which individuals are embedded into organizations could be what is holding back professional women more than a lack of human capital i.e. skill and knowledge. Both Tharenou (1999) and Liff and Ward (2001) suggest that a lack of social capital could prevent women from making it to the top of their field. The initial results from the survey also showed this. The respondents were asked indirectly about informal networks in their workplace in the guise of an 'after-work drinks culture' where *'55% of respondents said that there was no after-hours drinks culture in their workplace. 52% of women did say that important decisions were being made outside of office hours though. It was concluded that these findings showed that informal social networks continue to flourish and that women may be excluded especially given that men continue to dominate the IT workplace'* (Moore et al 2005a: 18).

Given the social expectation that the responsibility for bearing children brings with it: the responsibility for child-rearing, a role which is not associated with the embodiment of fatherhood, it is perhaps unsurprising to learn that, for the mothers of very young children who work full time, the path to senior management can be difficult. Women managers with no children may be censured for failing to perform their embodied femininity in accordance with social expectations (Davidson and Cooper 1992). This responsibility is perhaps one of the reasons that women don't make it to the pub after work to be included in 'important' decision-making.

Networks are also important when it comes to women having a voice in the workplace. The issue of 'voice and silence' in the workplace has been raised by

Morrison and Milliken (2003) who found that *'A person can be silent about an issue out of fear - he/she could be afraid of being punished by a boss for speaking up about an issue that the boss did not want to hear about. Alternatively, an individual may fear being labeled a 'complainer' or 'troublemaker' and the subsequent social isolation to which such labels can lead'* (Morrison and Milliken 2003: 5) whereas Piderit and Ashworth (2003) found that it was important to create a climate in which it feels safe for employees to speak up arguing that *'top managers wishing to encourage open dialogue about gender-equity issues must find ways to immunize their members against image risk in order to get a clear reading of managers' and employees' levels of concern about gender-equity issues'* (Piderit and Ashworth, cited in Morrison and Milliken 2003: 5). Support networks, perceived allies and whether the setting is 'public' or 'private' have all been identified as important in terms of whether a woman employee feels able to raise gender equity issues in the workplace (Moore et al 2005a: 6).

Historically, keeping women out of the 'male' workplace was one tactic used by men to prevent women becoming economically independent and was achieved by excluding them from access to skills and training men took for granted Cockburn (1985). The negation of women's technical skills and accomplishments has occurred throughout history and in the case of black women this has been two-fold due to the situation presented by the gender-race dualism Wajcman (1991).

Turkle (1995), thought that new technology would give people the opportunity *'to express multiple and often unexplored aspects of the self, to play with their identity and to try out new ones'* (Turkle 1995: 12).

4.2. Conflict

In their 2005 study Moore et al found that 32 women in their sample (approximately a quarter) had raised issues concerning the treatment of female employees. Out of these 32 women 82% felt supported by their female colleagues whilst 60% felt supported by their male colleagues. 54% felt supported by their line manager and only 50% felt supported by their organisation. Moore et al (2002) concluded that women do not perceive their workplaces to be that supportive when these concerns are raised. As Banks and Milestone point out in reference to Adkins (1999) and McRobbie (2002): -

‘In the new cultural economy, with its emphasis on individual talent, initiatives like equal opportunities legislation, anti-discrimination policies, collective representation and so on tend to be viewed as inappropriate hangovers from the old economy, structures that inhibit creativity and introduce elements of drag into the necessarily fast and free-flowing process of reflexive production.’ Banks and Milestone (2011: 7)

It’s interesting that the elements that appear to be causing the drag also conveniently support those elements i.e. men in their ‘free-flowing’ roles in this new economy.

Banks and Milestone (2011) argue that: -

‘...reflexive work opportunities for both men and women are closely linked to the ongoing requirements of women to conduct domestic and familial labour.’ Banks and Milestone (2011: 6)

Faulkner’s (2005) study of engineers also threw up the same dynamic leading her to assert: -

'The conventional gendering of the technical-social dualism simply cannot be ignored if we are to understand the continued male-dominance of engineering and come up with better ways of improving the representation of women in engineering. The need to 'count past two' applies in relation to both gender and engineering: in particular, the need to challenge the all too easy.' Faulkner (2005: 15)

The informality of work practices and relationships within project based new media although regarded as a major attraction of the work by the majority of the respondents is also viewed as problematic by many of the same workers, especially women Gill (2002): -

'Informality caused problems for some women across a range of experiences: working with men in male dominated teams e.g. inappropriate sexualised interaction, sexist assumptions, laddish culture (cf. Tierney 1995; Devine 1992); the absence of clear criteria for evaluating work; and, above all, in relation to finding and securing new contracts. Access to new contracts was controlled informally, and work was invariably allocated on the basis of interpersonal connections. Women and men told us that finding new projects was determined by 'who you know, not what you know', but this was perceived by some women as a form of gendered exclusion - the activities of an 'old boys network'.' (Gill 2002: 20)

The issue of informality in the workplace comes up time and time again and not in a positive light. Most of the studies examined show that women see these informal structures as supporting sexist discrimination that in a lot of cases is difficult to

pinpoint which is one of the main reasons why formal complaints procedures were introduced to protect workers in the first place. Transparency and formal channels offer women the protection of the law whereas informal agreements are only as good as the politics of those who are making the agreements and can very quickly just fit in with those who have most power in the organisation i.e. men.

4.2.1. Barriers in the Workplace

Gill (2002) interestingly found that the new media workers in her study included only a small number of people who said they had children with none of those being women. In a later study Gill (2007) found exactly the same: new media workers were putting off having children due to the demands of the work/culture of the industry: -

‘Very few of our participants were parents, despite being an age cohort in which this is relatively common. Many people expressed the view that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to combine parenting with new media work. For those who wanted to have children, this caused some stress and some considered leaving the field in order to have children.’ (Gill 2007: 6)

There could be a number of reasons for this as Davidson and Cooper (1992: 137) show how mothers with young children who work full-time receive expressions of ‘disgust’ when others learn that they are combining motherhood with full-time employment. The stress that full-time working mothers experience is often exacerbated because such women are accused of being uncommitted to their professional employment (Desmarais and Alksnis 2005; Hopkins 2005).

In the case of working mothers some employers may require those who work full-time to be 'flexible' in relation to putting in long hours at the office whilst blocking their career progress either because they cannot accept that women can combine mothering with a high work orientation (Desmarais and Alksnis 2005; Fielden and Cooper 2002). A professional and/or managerially employed mother who works full-time could find herself in the position of being seen both as a 'nominal' mother, who is failing in her maternal role and at the same time as an uncommitted, unambitious employee (Moorhead 2004: 10) whereas she could be deeply committed both to her children and to her paid job (Gatrell 2005). Desmarais and Alksnis (2005) have found that employed mothers experience role stress because they are seen as being neither the 'ideal' worker or mother, or both. Mothers are accused of '*violating the normative assumptions of the role of women ... simply by choosing to be employed*' (Desmarais and Alksnis 2005: 459). All of this just leads mothers to feel inadequate as both mothers and workers (Desmarais and Alksnis 2005).

For women who do make it into 'higher managerial' positions i.e. managing men and women, questions intent on undermining their position can arise with regards to their sexuality and/or femininity sending a clear message out to other women who dare to transgress the hetero-gendered norm in gender technology relations (Stepulevage 1997: 31). In a 1950's study the terms 'married' men and 'unmarried' women were used to convey what was 'normal' and who was considered to be 'deviant'. In this study the managerial style of 'unmarried' female managers was criticized by 'married' male staff (with children - even more 'normal') for not being 'warm' or 'motherly' (Company study, cited in Van Oost 1991, cited by Stepulevage in Lander

and Adam 1997: 31). This sort of undermining although subtle is extremely effective in promoting and maintaining dominant gendered relations in the workplace. In the corporate business world female managers are still more likely to be single than their male counterparts and are less likely to have children Wajcman (1998). In a more recent study Banks and Milestone (2011) agreed with Adkins (1999) when looking at how the traditional husband and wife heteronormative relationship is being utilized for the management roles required by the leisure industry: -

‘The appropriation of family labour in this context serves men well, for it is they, rather than their wives, who are the self-regulating, autonomous and reflexivized workers, while women must rely on their husbands for status and security. Indeed, it is the existence of such family relations of appropriation that frees up men to fulfill reflexive roles.’ (Banks and Milestone 2011: 7)

The failure of the liberal equal opportunities strategy to provide an adequate framework for change has led a number of feminist commentators to research the male/female dichotomy. Wajcman (1991) argues *‘If science is seen as an activity appropriate for men, then it is hardly surprising that girls usually do not want to develop the skills and behaviours considered necessary for success in science’* (Wajcman 1991: 2). Cockburn asserts *‘it is the most damning indictment of skilled working-class men and their unions that they excluded women from membership and prevented them gaining competencies that could have secured them a decent living’* Cockburn (1985: 39).

Another major issue is that of presenteeism, Moore et al (2005b) found that *‘working long hours may be related to promotional prospects, and it is in this sense that*

working cultures can maintain positions of privilege, even in the face of concerted efforts and initiatives to enhance equality and diversity' (Moore et al 2005b: 6).

4.2.2. Post-feminism

Gill (2002: 23) identified what she termed the 'post-feminist problem'. By this Gill is referring to the inability of most of the new media women in her survey to understand their experiences as having anything to do with gender. 75% of women in her survey denied having experienced any disadvantages in entering the industry. Gill does note though that the same applied to people from ethnic minorities and disabled people leading her to conclude that the issue was one of structural inequalities in general as opposed to just a gender issue.

As we noted earlier, a striking feature of the field is the dominance of individualistic and meritocratic discourses. Even though in some situations both women and men 'know' that they are not operating in a meritocratic system - contracts are not allocated on performance or experience but on connections, for example - there is a profound reluctance to jettison or even question this discourse among most respondents. Women were 'caught' within a discourse similar to that described by Flis Henwood as 'WISE discourse', which has *'the effect of individualising their experiences, making it difficult for them to use such experiences as a basis for collective action and change'* (Henwood 1996: 11). When individualistic understandings dominate over sociological ones in this way disappointing (and even discriminatory) experiences are understood as personal failures or as random events (see also Gill 1993 for a discussion of 'new sexism' in broadcasting).

Gill (2002) research presents her with many dilemmas in that her data clearly shows that there are gendered patterns to her respondents' experiences but her respondents are in denial about whether gender has anything to do with their own personal experiences. This leads her to question the validity of the respondents' accounts. Gill asserts that *'it is the tension between the different types of evidence that requires exploration'* and suggests that more research is needed on why a discourse (like those of feminisms) that make gender visible is not deployed by the majority of the women. She questions whether it's simply not available to them or if they just have access *'to a media caricature of feminism'*. She also questions whether they have *'considered it and rejected it as an inadequate account of their experiences'* and wonders whether *'using such a discourse might be dangerous for their career'*. One of Gill's respondents shed some light in a conference workshop, *'you don't talk about gender if you want to get on'*, to which there were many nods of assent from other women. Gill concludes that *'it's rejection, then, a knowing strategy deployed astutely by women who understand that a language of individualism is the way to succeed in new media?'* Outside of the safety of the conference an image of new media as an informal and egalitarian industry full of young, diverse types who are the epitome of cool persists with the workers themselves *'wedded to a representation of themselves and their world as dynamic and meritocratic, where the best succeed through performance alone, and where blacks and whites, gays and straights, women and men all start out on an equal footing'* (Gill 2002: 24).

What is clear from Gill's study is that new media freelancers work in an industry in which there are clear divergences between men's and women's experiences, and they

have no language to make sense of this, except in individualistic terms which inevitably construct women's relative lack of success in terms of individual failure (couldn't hack it, wasn't good enough, not committed enough, etc). Many women buy into this discourse, and individual women can and do succeed. But ultimately its individualism, combined with the *'hip, cool and equal'* speak in and about the industry, conceals (and renders difficult to speak of) the serious patterns of inequality that are emerging in this new field Gill (2002: 25).

4.3. Training and Education

According to E-Skills (2008) figures, IT-related Higher Education remains an important source of talent for the sector's labour force requirements. There has been a massive drop off in the uptake of Computer related degrees over the last five years. UK applicants to Computing / Information Systems / Software Engineering courses have dropped by 50%, down to 13,500 people by 2006. This is of great concern for a discipline of strategic importance to the UK. In addition to the 1,150 Degree courses in these categories, there are numerous other IT-related courses, which have 'Computing' or 'IT' terms in their titles (for example combined courses). In light of employment growth dynamics, it is expected that there will be increasing emphasis on courses, which bring together business schools and computer science departments.

In schools and colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, students have the option to study A-levels in Computing, ICT and Applied ICT. The content of the Computing A-level is more relevant to IT-related Higher Education and IT-related employment than ICT (which is more focused on skills in the use of IT). However,

for students wishing to enter IT-related degree courses, a Computing A-level is a pre-requisite for less than 4% of the 5,000 IT-related courses on offer. Mathematics dominates where pre-requisites are specified (12% of courses). ICT does not appear as a pre-requisite for any course. The drop off in students taking A-level Computing mirrors that of Computing degrees. There are also dropping numbers on the GCSE in ICT. There are widespread concerns amongst both employers and Higher Education about the technology curriculum in schools. Research by both E-Skills UK and by the universities' Council for Professors and Heads of Computing concludes that the widespread negative experiences students have with GCSE in ICT is a primary reason for the drop off in interest at A-level (E-Skills UK 2008).

As is the case in industry, gender imbalance is prevalent on IT-related courses, and this is worsening over time throughout the education system. 15% of applicants to Computing degree courses are female and 10% of A-level Computing students are female E-Skills (2008). The industry believes that there needs to be a major review of technology-related education pre-19, and that encouraging more girls to study IT-related subjects is a clear priority. Building on linkages between Higher Education and employers will be help to promote and develop courses across the diversity of Higher Education provision (E-Skills 2008).

There is a problem of definition with regards to what an ICT workplace is (Von Hellens et al 2004), and what it might be in the future. The WWW- ICT project (2003) highlights this difficulty, and seeks conceptual clarification by distinguishing between ICT and 'ICT-enabled' occupations, mapping them along the trajectories of 'business domain knowledge' and 'ICT knowledge' (Moore et al 2003: 17). Moore

et al (2005b) believe we should be wary of rigid definitions given the fast moving nature of the industry and the widespread use of ICT in all areas of economic and social life. One former President of the British Computer Society, Wendy Hall believes that a growing emphasis on personal as well as system skills may mean a greater demand for 'softer' scientific and social scientific skills from subjects such as biology, psychology and sociology which have been traditionally female dominated (Hall and Klawe 2004). One of the most consistent findings from Skillset's surveys has been the under-representation of women aged over 35 in the new media sector. Overall, nearly two thirds (64%) of men are 35 or over compared with around a half (51%) of women. This pattern is true for every sector and in some cases, more than three quarters of men or less than half of women are aged 35 or over.

This could be explained by higher proportions of women having entered the industry in recent years, which would result in women having a younger age profile than men. However, taking into account that women are a minority in virtually every sector, the implication is that there are very few women remaining in the industry into middle age and beyond. This may be largely explained by the phenomenon for women in the new media industry to be far less likely than men to have dependent children living with them. Over one third of men have dependent children under the age of 16, but less than a quarter of women. This pattern holds true across every sector and lends support to the theory that women who have children are leaving the industry (Skillset 2010).

Although there is a problem with the blurring of the definition of ICTs - new media being a subset, it can be seen that women in particular are marginalised in the areas of use, control and design (Richardson and French 2002). The UK government's acknowledgement of this means that a number of initiatives to encourage more girls

and women into the industry have been given both financial and political support. A 'UK Resource Centre for Women in SET' based in Bradford is currently being funded by the government. Some of the key aims identified by the Director of the Resource Centre include closing the skills gap in these industries through the exploitation of women's talents and expertise and encouraging women returners back into quality positions following career breaks (The Register 2004). Skillset (2010) also found that there is a distinct lack of middle age women in every sector of the new media industry because women are leaving to have children.

4.3.1. Higher Education

Figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show that in 2004 19% of all students on undergraduate computer science degrees in the UK were women; by 2009, the most recent year available, that figure had fallen to 16% (Shepherd 2012). In higher education the major focus has been on the structural barriers that are seen to limit women's access and on cognitive differences in relation to gender, class and ethnicity that affect the learning process. This has led to the adoption of two interventionist strategies - the deficit model and the difference model (Sonnert 1995) neither of which have brought about any real change in terms of recruiting or retaining female undergraduates in computer science or engineering courses (Sian 1997). The 'deficit model' focuses on schemes that will 'encourage' women onto computer/engineering courses in a misguided effort that effects little change if any at all. These liberal feminist approaches are often industry led and backed by advertising campaigns that actively target women such as 'Women into Technology' (WIT). The technology related courses that are being offered to women are those that

will provide them with the necessary qualifications to plug the gaps in the areas where the industry anticipates skills shortages. The second liberal approach to the 'women in computing' problem is the 'difference' model. This approach is concerned with cognitive differences and this focuses on course curricula. 'Women friendly' optional modules on interdisciplinary courses offering 'softer' options or focusing on the 'feminine' attributes women are seen to possess. Faulkner (2005) maintains that this problem could be partly overcome if the industry made the effort to *'strive to 'normalise' engineering as a career choice for women - in relation to retention as well as recruitment - through campaigns both within and outwith the profession'* (Faulkner 2005: 16).

In their study of gender inequality in higher education Adam and Wyer (1999-2000) looked at both the structural barriers that limit many women's opportunities and the cognitive differences, which lead some students to perform better than others in the classroom. Where structural barriers are identified as the problem, the 'deficit' model, which assumes that the woman lacks some key factor, is adopted. Examples of this involve providing mentors and extra tuition. Where cognitive differences are considered to be the problem, the 'difference' model is adopted with its emphasis on the role of life experiences in the development of learning styles and career aspirations. Implementation of this model has led to the introduction of women's studies into engineering and maths curricula at pre-college and college levels and to the development of courses such as 'Culturally Inclusive Chemistry' and 'Earth Systems'.

Adam and Wyer (1999-2000: 5) take issue with these simplistic liberal approaches and argue that neither 'fixing the women' nor 'fixing the curriculum' alone are the

answer to redressing gender inequality in higher education and propose that '*a multi-level approach to understanding how computer technologies figure and potentially refigure gender constructs in Western culture*' Adam and Wyer (1999-2000: 6) be adopted. Henwood (1999) and Adam and Wyer (2000) advocate that the 'symbolic' level is critical in shaping gender technology relations and the crucial third level to this multi-level approach (Adam and Wyer 1999-2000: 6).

In education there has been a major focus on both the structural barriers that seem to limit women's access and on the cognitive differences in relation to gender, class and ethnicity that affect the learning process. This has given rise to two different interventionist strategies - the deficit model and the difference model (Sonnert 1995) neither of which have brought about any significant changes in either attracting or retaining female undergraduates in computer science courses (Siann 1997: 115). The deficit model is governed by the same liberal equal opportunities and access strategies; the 'deficit' model fits neatly into the 'women in computing' model. This has resulted in educational institutions adopting schemes that will 'encourage' women onto computer/engineering courses in a misguided effort that effect little if any change. Here, 'special' tutoring, role models and actively targeting women through advertising such as the early 'Women into IT' (WIT) campaigns have all been used to attract women onto technological courses. These technology-based courses are seen to provide the necessary skills that women are seen to lack and of which the industry is seen to need.

The second approach, the 'difference' model is more concerned with the learning styles/patterns of women and has resulted in course curriculum being changed and

new 'women' friendly optional modules being added to courses situated in the interdisciplinary departments with women only space. The 'difference' model fits into the 'women and technology' model approach in that it focuses on the 'feminine' attributes that women are seen to possess.

In 1996 Flis Henwood highlighted problematic aspects of WISE (Women into Science and Engineering) discourse. These problematic aspects include a particular concentration on women's 'choices' which are constructed as constrained predominately by the masculine 'image' of SET careers and a lack of information on SET careers (leading to women 'not realising' what their career choices are). Calls for girls and women to be 'educated' about the possibilities of SET careers continue today (Computer Weekly 2008) although UK research council (UKRC), an organisation that works to address the under-representation of women in science, engineering, technology and the built environment, says initiatives focused solely on young women and girls are '*not prevalent*'. Initiatives that do exist include a computer club for girls and a campaign to encourage girls to get into IT both run by E-Skills UK, which works on behalf of employers, while the British Computer Society has a women's network and mentors girls. Toymaker Mattel has also launched a computer engineer Barbie doll (Shepherd 2012). By examining work-life balance and flexibility in working practices specifically in the ICT/new media sector, we can move away from the 'women into computing' arguments of better information and industry image improvements, and start to examine the substantive problems faced by its female workers. The WISE assumption that women were put off technical courses because of the masculine image was also challenged by Henwood's findings, which supported Hacker's view that some women are attracted

to technological work because it is '*both pleasurable and empowering for women*' (Hacker, cited in Henwood 1996: 13). Henwood, Plumerage and Stepulevage (2000) examine the relationship between technology and inequality through a comparative analysis of two different computer studies groups in the UK higher education. One of the findings from this showed that women-only modules in Computer Studies could be problematic for women because of men's undermining attitudes towards them if they choose to attend them. In examining frameworks to transform the gender and IT relationship Henwood (1993) recommends that we increase our knowledge of women's individual experiences of technology and take this as a starting point to create new subject positions for women to occupy. Henwood sees the technologies themselves as 'cultural products', 'objects' or 'processes' that take on meanings, which are subject and context, specific. Henwood (1993: 43) maintains that it is with these 'lived experiences' of technology that alternatives to dominant discourse will be found (see also Thomas 2004).

In examining the symbolic level Henwood reflects on research she carried out in a UK higher education college in the mid 1980s and the early 1990s. Henwood argues that a greater understanding of the meanings and subject positions men and women occupy in dominant discourse, coupled with the development and promotion of more marginal discourse positions, offers '*an excellent starting point for the development of serious deconstructionist work in IT higher education*' (Henwood 1999: 6). In examining this model Henwood argues '*that efforts to create 'women friendly' courses in computer science must promote students' awareness of (and resistance to) prevailing gender norms.*' Her study explores the difficulties women face in both conventional and specifically designed college courses due to lack of support from

the colleges promoting awareness amongst students about how the gender norms of the college reflect those of society. When women step outside of these work ‘norms’ what they are actually doing is something far greater. Research on posing threats or challenges to dominant gender relations in mainstream education has shown that women are reminded of where they should stand in accordance with dominant hetero-gendered social relations (Henwood, Plumeridge and Stepulevage 2000). Henwood (1993) advocates discourse theory as a framework for analysing gender-technology relations. She uses the term ‘discourse’ as described by Hudson (1984), to denote ‘*a snapshot of the matrix of idea, technology and practices surrounding an area of social life at a particular time*’ (Hudson 1984, cited in Henwood 1993: 41). Hughes (2001) suggests that the gendering of science is symbolic and that this gender symbolism is used in curricula practices that in turn reproduce and legitimise dominant gender-science relations. Hughes goes on to say that ‘*holding onto the security of gender binaries both masks the complexity of the production of scientist subjectivities and is in danger of perpetuating gender exclusionary discourses and practices.*’ Hughes calls for recognition of the complex and fluidity of students’ subjectivities and a new framework that challenges the dualistic gender-science relationship that will offer an array of subject positions for students to identify and occupy (Hughes 2001: 15). Milestone and Meyer (2011) show that women’s engagement with constructed media images was not passive and uncritical but instead active, critical and reflexive. The industry should aim to truly understand this when undertaking any recruitment drive for women.

4.3.2. Training Projects

The literature on gender and technology mainly focuses on higher education, work and schools with very little information on the voluntary sector projects and even less on voluntary sector women-only projects. A case study reviewing the equal opportunities measures taken by the European Commission's Action Programmes on education and training (Rees 1994) examined the effectiveness of Positive Action programmes and suggests they were highly effective in developing the skills of relatively small numbers of women who had access to them. Rees is a supporter of mainstreaming and sees positive action programmes as benefiting the few and maintaining the status quo.

Within the European Union The European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs (DGV) is responsible for the allocation of funds to authorities and organisations through the European Social Fund (ESF). This fund is one of the EC's Structural funds and was set up to address long-term and youth unemployment and to enable the regeneration of the economies of regions that were either in decline or who were trying to restructure. The ESF allows organisations from Member States to tap into EU funding that is 'matched' by a certain percentage, depending on the EU classification of the region, by local/regional authorities. Part of the WEVH's first main funding grant came through the ESF's New Opportunities for Women (NOW) programme with the matched funding being provided by local government monies.

Three white papers published by the European Commission provide the framework for future policies and action at a European level on economic, social and education and training policy. The first of these was the economic paper Growth,

Competitiveness and Employment: The Challenges and Ways Forward into the 21st Century (EC 1994a) published in the 1994 which focuses on developing competitiveness in the context of the Single European Market faced with an ageing workforce and severe skill shortages. A second White paper on social policy also published in 1994 entitled European Social Policy: A Way Forward for The Union (EC 1994b) focused on 'social exclusion'. In this paper women and children were identified as being most at risk of poverty and social exclusion and women's skills training was seen as a crucial and integral part of the Union's social policy in combating both economic and social polarisation.

The third important White Paper published in 1996, Teaching and learning: Towards the Learning Society (EC 1996b) focused on the education and training of the EU's workforce. It took the two main arguments outlined in the economic and social White Papers i.e. the development of economic competitiveness and tackling social exclusion and placed them in the context of a 'knowledge-based society'. The concept of 'lifelong learning' as a strategy to deal with the lack of young people entering the workforce, low birth-rates, and an ageing EU population was conceived. The existing workforce was expected to train and re-train to remain employable in the job market.

Neither the third or first paper mention women as a specific category whereas the second paper clearly states that women and children are at specific risk. This contradiction leads Rees (1998: 194) to argue that the failure to recognize the significance of gender in the 1994 and 1996b papers, which deal with economic competitiveness and education and training of the workforce whilst deeming women

to be a socially excluded group in the 1994 paper, results in women having to '*march to the male 'stride'*' and that it is the '*stride*' rather than the march that is the problem (Rees 1998: 189).

In 1994 a questionnaire survey was carried out by the Centre of Employment Research (CER) to determine the impact of women-only training, women-centered IT training and how women were using technology after their courses. This was carried out at the three funded EVHs in Manchester and showed that playing games was the number one activity at this time. In addition another questionnaire based survey (Dyson 1999) carried out on behalf of the WEVH focused on '*how women were using technology at home and work, their employment and education status, their attitudes to, and perceptions of technology, and if the characteristics of women-only training supported their learning of IT.*' One of the main aims of Dyson's survey was to find out to what extent the WEVH was fulfilling its aims and objectives as set out in its Memorandum and Articles. On the whole Dyson found that The WEVH was fulfilling these aims and objectives.

In the European Union gender segregation in education, training and the workforce has been tackled by three approaches. First there is equal treatment, a model with its roots in liberal feminism coming under the 'women into computing' approach (Henwood 1993: 31). In the mid 1980's positive action was introduced coming under the 'women and computing' approach (Henwood 1993: 31) followed by mainstreaming a more recent approach that seeks to challenge gender technology relations at a more structural level. Mainstreaming at EU level involves the incorporation of equal opportunities into all EU actions, programmes and policies

from the outset. It goes further than the equal treatment and positive action approaches incorporating gender monitoring into EO alongside regular reviews using gender indicators to monitor success. Part of this approach is the actual publishing of the findings thus making the whole process transparent.

Rees (1998: 9) argues that VET systems more appropriate to the needs of women cannot alone produce changes in the gender technology relations of the labour market. However, a mainstreaming approach, which integrates EO policies, would have potential to challenge gender segregation, *'by tackling the basis of the gender contract i.e. the ideological stereotypical white nuclear family underpinned by welfare, taxation, and other areas of policy as well as education, training and the labour market.'* Rees focuses on the role of the education and training policies and practices within the EU in the reproduction of gender segregation. She looks historically at the various approaches taken over the years in an attempt to deliver equal opportunities to both women and men.

Rees looks at equal treatment, positive action and mainstreaming and comes to the conclusion that *'Positive action projects, while creating spaces for women and being laboratories for the development of good practice, appear to be precariously funded, provision is ad hoc, and there are few linkages to mainstream providers. It is mainstreaming which is likely to have the most significant impact on developing women's skills and the rigidities of gender segregation in the labour market. It also has the capacity to move beyond gender into other dimensions of equality, such as race and disability'* (Rees 1998: 189).

Historically both horizontal segregation (men and women working in different industries and occupations) and vertical segregation (women and men working at different levels hierarchically) have been maintained rather than challenged by the policies set out to change them. In the case of VET systems the system as a whole mirrors the gendered patterns of segregation in the workplace as a society as a whole. Rees sees this segregation as being rooted in the androcentricity of the VET system that has led to a highly gendered hierarchical system which like the labour market starts with the bosses/policy makers and managers/providers of the system and is reflected in the terms and conditions of the training/work. It can be seen in the culture of the workplace/training workshop where it is further reflected in who actually takes up the training/work provided by the system (Rees 1998: 68).

4.3.3. Schools

There has been much written about the lack of interest that girls have in ICTs and new media in schools and the reasons for this. The most interesting finding in relation to this study was Spender's below.

Willis (1991) researched girls' and boys' computer use and discovered different patterns of behaviour. In this research the results showed that boys were more likely to choose structured exercises. These results were presented to teachers attending a conference.

‘They surmised that boys played games because they were confident with computers, whereas girls worked through the instructions because they lacked confidence and were reduced to just following the program set out for them.’ (Spender 1995: 179)

Spender reversed the findings and presented them to another teachers’ conference with the following feedback: *‘Boys worked through the programs, because they were confident and knew what they were doing’ whereas ‘girls played games because they didn’t know about computers, lacked confidence and wouldn’t be able to tackle serious stuff.’* Spender (1995: 180)

This misinterpretation of behavioural meanings dependant on the subject’s gender reflects the gender-hierarchical binaries that are produced and re-produced in educational institutions where essentialist understandings of gender are used to reinforce dominant gender-technology relations.

4.4. Conclusion

Hughes (1986) suggested the hybrid word ‘sociotechnical’ to denote the ‘artificiality’ of the split between the ‘technical’ and ‘social’ elements of technology. Thus the starting point for social/feminist studies of technology is that the relationship between society and technology is that of a densely interactive seamless web (Hughes 1986: 281-92). Here we see the implications of this normative social-technical split being played out in relation to gender identity and skills in the new media workplace where the gender norms of society are reflected and in turn those of the workplace reinforce the dominant gender relations at play in wider society. There has been a long history of liberal feminist politics dominating the gender and technology discourse which has led to calls for more empirical research on women’s

every day experiences of technology (Henwood 1993: 44). Despite this criticism, policymakers have opted for these liberal strategies as opposed to the radical approaches informed by a more complex multi-layered awareness of how technology and gender are played out at the individual, the structural and the symbolic levels of society (Adam and Wyer 1999-2000). The liberal politics of the late '80s and '90s also fed into industry led initiatives that were clearly more geared towards the needs of industry and have failed to effect any real or lasting change. Devine (1992) rightly points out: -

‘Economic factors (skills shortages) were reluctantly pushing the employers to recruit women in technical jobs rather than social factors (equal opportunities) pulling them to employ them.’ Devine (1992: 565)

Feminist constructivist accounts of technology see it as a social or cultural contract that reflects the dominant social relations and cultural norms of the organization. Cockburn (1985) has shown how technical skills and technology are embodied in the construction of gender identities. If you are male you are seen as being technological with technology being identified as masculine and if you are female you are seen to be non-technical with non-technical work being identified as being feminine and therefore women's work (Cockburn 1985, cited in Henwood 2000). Ten years later and women are being employed in the new media workplace to brighten up the office! (Banks and Milestone 2011: 9).

More radical theorists have adopted a symbolic/cultural approach where gender and technology are seen to be mutually constitutive of one another. Technology is seen as

being culturally defined so that it has specific meanings according to which particular cultural context it is situated. This understanding or definition of what is technology can then change according to the individual situations it is experienced in (Linn 1987; McNeil 1987, cited in Henwood 1993).

In the past women would have been denied credibility for their achievements due to the definition of technology itself and who is doing the defining. Early computer programmers, mainly women, were classified as clerks and their work as low skilled. Secretarial work pre-1950s was seen as being technical and highly skilled and was done by men. Who decides what is technical is therefore more important than what actually is technical since the term itself is relatively fluid and in the labour market depends more on the '*negotiating strength and power of different actors in the workplace*' (Cockburn 1983, cited in Henwood 1993: 39).

It would appear that if a job is defined as 'technical' then mainly men will be doing that job and if women are doing the work it will be defined as women's work and therefore 'non-technical'.

Although both Linn (1987) and McNeil (1985) both work within a social constructivist framework they take a different approach by focusing on the symbolic aspects of technology. They argue that technologies are 'cultural products', 'objects or processes' rather than simply a product of culture and that they take on different meanings according to the particular context in which they are experienced in and by whom.

Linn goes on to suggest that perhaps it is more useful to ask what gets called technology, and more important to look at what constitutes a challenge to definitions of technology. Rather than consider questions of access to taken-for-granted areas of technological practice we should be challenging the definitions of technological practice itself (Linn 1987, cited in Henwood 1993: 44).

Likewise Henwood has also taken issue with Cockburn's assertion that we should be focusing on getting more women into technological work and suggests that *'rather than arguing for women's inclusion in areas of work currently defined as skilled and technical we should be arguing for a total re-evaluation of women's work so that many of women's traditional tasks are also recognized as skilled and technical and are given the appropriate remuneration'* Henwood (1993: 40).

In reviewing Cockburn (1985) McNeil goes on to suggest *'this dual process of gendering and subdivision serves to reproduce male dominance. When women appear to be replacing men, you can almost always be sure the job has been redesigned and devalued (in pay, status and conditions) in some way'* McNeil (1987).

In this chapter we have looked at how these gender 'differences' present in the male/female dichotomy and hierarchical binary merely serve to maintain the status quo. From examining literature from the 80s through until now we can see that despite new media being an emerging sector in the creative industries we are still seeing evidence of these binaries being propagated and with little recourse for action given the lack of formal channels for disciplinary action (Gill 2002, 2008; Banks and Milestone 2011).

With fewer women entering into new media related courses in Higher Education coupled with women leaving the industry after having children or being put on the mummy track it is clear that there needs to be an overhaul and acknowledgement that the industry is failing women at each crucial stage of their engagement. It is also failing to recruit and retain women because the needs of the industry are being put before those of women. Women are brought in when there is shortage basically to fill gaps with no strategy in place for ensuring that they will have rewarding careers within the new media industry.

Chapter 5

5. Methodological Approach and Research Design

5.0. Introduction

The literature on gender and the new media industry revealed a paucity of research examining women's experiences of the new media sector that took into account the effect of women-only training. Research tended to concentrated on the IT sector as a whole (Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005a; 2005b), at women's experiences of sub cultures within the industry (Richards and Milestone 2000), the new media sector itself (Gill 2002; Banks and Milestone 2011) or when evaluating women only training courses the focus was on the courses and service providers rather than the women themselves (Henwood 1998; Dyson 1999; Rees 1994). When women's training and their employment have been looked at together it has been in a slightly different area. Ellen and Herman (2005) looked at the training and employment of women ICT technicians. None of the studies mentioned compared women who had experienced women-only training with a group of women who had trained in a mixed environment. This study aims to compare two distinct groups of women: one who has studied at a women only centre in Manchester, the WEVH with a group of women whose training experience has been with a mixed group. My research involved two different target groups - one group of women working in the new media sector who had been trained at a women-only training centre and another group of new media women who had been trained in a mixed sex environment. I decided quite early on that this would not be a large-scale questionnaire survey and

that using semi-structured interviews would provide a greater insight into women's everyday lives. In terms of actual work it didn't seem problematic that most of the self-employed women were either working on their own or in very small businesses with often just one or two other colleagues. More importantly all of the women had been working in their field for at least 8 years or more and had an enormous amount of experience to share.

5.1. Feminist Research Methods

Wharton (2005) uses three necessarily partial frameworks to classify the way that sociologists explain the social practices that organise gender. These frameworks correspond to where the 'sociological action' is with respect to the social practices that produce gender. She notes that for some '*this resides in individuals - their personalities, traits, emotions etc*' (2005:8); the individualist approach. The social practice associated with this approach is socialization, or '*the processes through which individuals take on gendered qualities*' (2005:31). In contrast Wharton's interactional approaches understand gender as inherently contextual in its creation, maintenance, impact and adaptation. Finally, Wharton's institutional approach also contextual in its nature sees gender as embedded in the structures and practices of organizations and social institutions. The research from this study will be analysed and placed firmly in the interactional and institutional frameworks for understanding gender. Each of the approaches has its own particular focus on diverse aspects of the social world. By focusing on the interactional and institutional aspects of gender it is possible to perceive gender as a more relational term than the individualist approach allows for (Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005b). The individualist approach sees

differences between women as a group and men as a group being greater than the differences within each sex category with sex being the main factor in constraining gender. Critics of research that focuses on sex differences point out that it *'often obscures the fact that different almost always means unequal'* (Hollander and Howard 2000: 340). New media/ICT researchers have to be aware of the way that 'gender' difference is historically and socio-culturally produced as a hierarchical binary with 'masculine' traits and emotions being privileged over supposedly 'feminine' traits' (Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005b: 4; see also Banks and Milestone 2011). Drawing on empirical evidence from their research on ICT designers and ICT users Rommes and Faulkner (2003) show how gender differences have two distinct features: -

'Firstly they are usually framed as dichotomous or mutually exclusive: the masculine side by definition not the feminine side and vice versa. Thus the nerd stereotype says you cannot be into being technical as well as being social. Second, there is usually a hierarchy implicit, in which the masculine side of the binary is valued over the feminine side hence the downplaying of the computer skills of the computer enthusiast girls.' (Rommes and Faulkner 2003: 5)

Interactional and institutional approaches to gender taken by feminist gender theorists see gender as a *'major social organizing principle that sorts people into two separate but unequal groups'* (Foster 1999:433). Feminist gender theorists reject the idea that gender is an attribute, a variable a static entity and/or a role assigned to individuals based on their natural sex category (Foster 1999). Instead, gender is

perceived as a social process and an ever shifting, historically and culturally-contextualised group of social practices that are constituted on manifold levels of social organization. This understanding enables us to focus on the links between identity, culture and social structure, on the histories of gender, on the everyday social practices that re-produce gender and on the social construction of unequal difference (Hacking 1999) for the everyday lives of women. Drawing on the work of Lamphere et al (1993) Foster reminds us that it is with this theoretical perspective in mind informing empirical work that allows for *'an analysis of both the differences and commonalities among women without taking 'women' as either a 'homogenised or decontextualised analytic'* (1999: 438). In their empirical study Von Hellens et al (2004) explore these binaries and how they relate to skills and attributes within IT work. Using Giddens' Structuration Theory (1984) to analyse their interview data, they show that the dualisms they identified represented skills and attributes as either/or propositions associated with gender, such as attention to detail (feminine) and assertiveness (masculine). However, they also identified contradictions in these gendered and gendering dualisms, *'indicating that these polarized views of women and IT work are undermined by women in the IT industry'* (Von Hellens et al 2004: 103). Von Hellens study provides an example of where gender can be seen in context and as a relational term as well as a social practice that impacts on women's lives across different times and spaces including the workplace and home. This enables us to argue that gender being socially constructed and contextual doesn't mean that gender has no real effect on the social world. Foster (1999) explains that *'when gender theorists argue that the category 'woman' is socially produced, they are in no way arguing that such social constructions do not have very real consequences for people's lives'* (Foster 1999: 441).

Moore, Griffiths and Richardson (2005b) have shown how it is possible to partially map the aforementioned frameworks onto two approaches used in the study of gender and ICT. The liberal feminist approach tends to focus on the exclusion of women in terms of access and barriers and Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) and Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) discourses.

The liberal feminist approach has been criticised both in general and for the way it suggests overcoming the gender imbalances in the workplace (Cockburn 1986; Linn 1987; McNeil 1985). The liberal 'individualism' approach has a tendency to blame women for not seeing the 'liberating' potential of new technologies and sees their 'failure' in this area as theirs for not being aware and engaging with it. The liberal feminist approach has also adopted an essentialist understanding of both women and technology (Henwood 1993) making any attempt at challenging technology relations limited as it leaves technology untroubled and advocates an equal opportunities approach that does not result in equality for women but instead invisibility and unrepresentedness (Fox-Keller 1986).

The contextualisation of the women and computing problem has enabled a more radical gender and technology debate. It allows us to highlight the many other issues that need addressing such as the unsuitability of the workplace for many women; the long hours culture; the difficulties that the presenteeism (Simpson 1998) mentality causes, especially for women with dependents; bulimic career patterns (Pratt 2000); the 'post-feminism' problem (Gill 2002) and a culture imbued with patriarchal values remains (Richards and Milestone 2000). It is suggested that the industry itself

needs to adapt rather than women having to constantly march to the male stride (Women and Equality Unit 2004; Platman and Taylor 2004).

In terms of analysis McRobbie (1997a) helps us to draw on the positive aspects of women's experiences whilst allowing a way around the limitations of the more traditional forms of standpoint feminism, which fails to deal with the category of 'women' in all its complexities. As a strategy McRobbie (1997b, cited in Moore et al 2005a: 5) suggests using what she calls the three 'E's'; the empirical, the ethnographic and the experiential which this research does and she also encourages us to be mindful of the three 'anti-E's', those being anti-essentialism, post-structuralism and psychoanalysis. In doing so it enables us to focus on women's experiences through the acknowledgement of their partiality and 'situatedness'. This partiality and situatedness when discussing the category of 'woman' is summarised by Bradiotti (1994): -

In feminist theory one speaks as a woman, although the subject 'woman' is not a monolithic essence, defined once and for all but rather the site of multiple, complex and potentially contradictory sets of experiences defined by overlapping variables such as class, race, age, lifestyle, sexual preferences and others (Bradiotti 1994: 4).

This research utilizes the politics of difference approach outlined by (Haraway 1991; Bradiotti 1994 and McRobbie 1997a, 1997b) which has allowed this researcher to focus on the partial and situated knowledges of the data gathered from this study

whilst at the same time to be aware of the pitfalls of liberal and stand point feminism in its analysis. McRobbie (1997a) states: -

'We can feel the anxieties about essentialism, know the nerves about making 'truth-claims', worry about the undermining of the status lived experience in a post-structuralist and deconstructive academic climate, and experience the insecurities of writing for and as women without claiming to be their 'representatives', and still (carefully) undertake research on the lived experiences of sexed subjects-in-culture.' (McRobbie 1997a, cited in Moore et al 2005a: 6)

When it comes to the 'technology' social constructionist theories have enabled some feminists to adopt an approach whereby both gender and technology are seen to be mutually constitutive of one another (Linn 1987; McNeil 1987; Henwood 1993).

Technologies are also seen to be culturally and historically embedded so that they have specific meanings according to which particular cultural and historical context they are situated in. This understanding of technology also enables us to challenge the supposedly liberatory potential of these technologies for women like telework/hot desking (Wilson and Greenhill 2004).

This understanding of how technology and gender are mutually constitutive of one another and whereby they are historically and culturally context specific also gives us an insight into gender-technology dualisms where female equals non-technical and male equals technical which are re-enforced through the workplace, the education system and other sub-divisions of society and vice versa and can be

deconstructed and challenged at three main levels: the individual, the structural and the symbolic (Cockburn 1983; Henwood 2000; Adam and Wyr 1999-2000; Richards and Milestone 2000). Wharton (2005) states: -

We cannot understand gender without understanding the social world. As social life unfolds, gender is produced; as gender is produced, social life unfolds. (Wharton 2005: 19).

5.2. The Research Question

The research question aims to explore new media training and its impact on women's careers in an emerging sector. The aims and objectives were generated from reading past and present academic writing on gender, ICT and new media which clearly shows that there are issues with life/work balance, women being heard in the workplace; gendered working patterns; recruitment and networking. McRobbie (1994) says: -

'In feminist theory one speaks as a woman, although the subject 'woman' is not a monolithic essence, defined once and for all but rather the site of multiple, complex and potentially contradictory sets of experiences defined by overlapping variables such as class, race, age, lifestyle, sexual preferences and others.' (McRobbie 1994: 4)

This research draws on the politics of difference when writing on 'women' suggested by Haraway (1991), Bradiotti (1994) and McRobbie (1997a, 1997b) and aims to

draw on its partial and situated knowledge approach in its exploration of women's experiences in relation to the following themes: women's experience of training; women's lived experiences of the workplace; women's language/ability to articulate their position in the contemporary workplace; women's awareness of gender politics/feminism and networks.

5.3. Research Methods and Design

Literature looking at research methods characterises research strategies in a number of ways. Robson (1995) describes three categories of traditional research strategies: surveys, case studies and experiments. Within the case study Yin (1994) characterises research as exploratory, explanatory or descriptive. This study uses the explorative survey method. Survey as described by Robson (1993) and exploratory as described by Yin (1993). This study also looks to Bryman (2004) in agreeing that one of the problems with characterising research methods is that one is always trying to outline an ideal approach which when created may not then be reflected entirely in the research practice. This gap can arise because we cannot cover every eventuality that can arise during the actual research and also what is set out is often a guideline for good practice which in reality can be affected by matters such as time, cost and feasibility so there is an element of compromise where the theory and the reality meet (Bryman 2004).

This research is a qualitative study in that the emphasis is on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings. Flick (2002) states that *'rapid social change and the resulting diversification of life worlds are increasingly confronting social researchers with new social contexts and perspectives... traditional deductive methodologies... are failing... thus research is increasingly forced to make use of*

inductive strategies instead of starting from theories and testing them.... Knowledge and practice are studied as local knowledge and practice' (2002: 2).

Positivism is an epistemological position that informs qualitative research in that it advocates using the methods of the natural sciences in the study of social reality. Unlike realism, which understands the scientist's conceptualization of reality as a way of knowing, positivists believe that the scientist actually directly reflects that reality (Bryman 2004).

Quantitative, positivist methods and assumptions have been rejected by a number of qualitative researchers in recent years some who are attached to post-structural and/or postmodern sensibilities. It is argued that positivist methods are only one way of writing about society or social worlds and that these methods are no worse than other methods: they just tell the stories in a different way (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Some critical theorists, constructivists, poststructuralists and postmodernists have rejected positivism and post positivism when evaluating their work. This criteria is seen as irrelevant and is believed to reproduce only a certain type of science, one that silences many voices. In rejecting this researchers seek other methods for evaluating their work such as emotionality, political praxis and multi-voiced texts, and dialogues with subjects to name a few. This way of working is seen as an attack on reason and truth by positivists and post positivists (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). In terms of this research only twenty women were interviewed for the main study and clearly it would have been far preferable to have interviewed forty but given the limitations of having only one interviewer and limited resources it was decided that interviewing twenty women would be far preferable to carrying out a quantitative study. As Bryman (2004) points out the instruments and procedures utilized in

quantitative research only goes to hinder the connections between research and everyday life. Since this study is concerned with women's everyday lives the instruments of quantitative studies such as self-completion questionnaires and structured interviews would as Lampiere (1934, cited in Bryman 2004) put it merely produce an answer that could be at odds with how it relates to the person's everyday life. One of the main benefits of interviewing in a semi-structured way is that it allows for people to clarify what you mean and this helps with how it relates to them. Cicourel (1982) states that the instruments associated with quantitative analysis are problematic in that we cannot know if the respondents have the required knowledge to answer the questions i.e. that they are aware of what it means or that we can be sure that it is of equal concern in how it connects to the respondents' everyday lives.

Again, qualitative research in the case of examining women's everyday lives is clearly the better option in that it can allow for 'nuances' to be interpreted and explained for clarity with regards to both the interviewer and respondent. As Robson (1993) rightly states the interview is a flexible and adaptable way of finding things out and being able to ask people directly about what is going on and allows us to pick up on non-verbal clues which can change the meaning of messages and sometimes in extreme cases reverse its meaning. Face to face interviews also allow us to modify our line of enquiry, follow up interesting responses and investigate underlying motives in a way that questionnaires cannot.

This research is influenced by queer theorists such as Judith Butler and Eva Kosofsky Sedgwick and acknowledges that '*gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on pre-given sex (a judicial*

conception); gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established (Butler [1990] 1999: 7). *‘Gender analysis enables us to understand the ‘epistemological power’ that binary gender and heterosexuality constructs of man/woman and sex/gender have on our understanding of a range of different political and social phenomena’* (Ackerly and True 2010: 26). Given that only eight of my 20 interviewees defined their sexuality as heterosexual and another eight defined as gay an understanding of the power as well as the subtleties of these issues was paramount in gaining the trust and respect of my interviewees. Having access to this rich demographic information has been very useful when considering ‘intersectionality’ with sexuality, race and the class of my interviewees.

Robson (1993) describes qualitative data as an ‘attractive nuisance’. The ‘rich’, ‘full’ and ‘real’ accounts associated with this type of research can also make it very difficult to analyse. Robert Yin (1989) and Miles and Huberman (1984) have given serious attention to this issue. In general the stance is scientific in a fairly conventional way and the logic is the sort usually found in qualitative analysis but given that the data is qualitative it adds a degree of rigour resulting in greater validity. Many empirical theorists regard materials produced by interpretative methods as unreliable therefore having used some of the methods employed by both Yin (1989) and Miles and Huberman (1984) the researcher has endeavored to add a degree of objectivity and robustness whilst still ensuring a rich description in that the individual’s point of view is captured.

Previous studies of the WEVH (CER 1994; Dyson 1999) used questionnaires with open-ended questions that required Yes/No responses. Walker (2005) conducted her

survey using in-depth interviews. This study's use of in-depth interviews as its research strategy is in line with a call for further research on women's lived experiences of technology (Henwood 1993).

This section outlines the factors influencing decisions to adopt the research strategy. The initial five themes of the study: - experience of training; lived experiences of the workplace; women's ability to articulate their position in the workplace; awareness of gender politics/feminism and use of networks were well suited to a qualitative research strategy because of the lack of previous work in this area. Using feminist gender theory as the theoretical framework for the investigation of women's lived experiences of the workplace made a qualitative approach to data an essential element of the research design. Firstly, recognition is given to the understanding that women in the new media industry are not a homogenous group. In order to avoid these homogenizing tendencies of standpoint feminism (Harding 1991; Hartsock 1993) it is necessary to highlight the commonalities and disparities of women's experiences.

At the outset of the research the intention was that the study would be exploratory using qualitative methods, generating results, which could then inform further research. A series of semi-structured interviews were designed to explore in-depth the experiences of two groups of women. This kind of empirical work is well suited to the exploration of women's experiences enabling a thorough exploration of the 'situated knowledges' (Bradiotti 1994; Haraway 1991 and McRobbie 1997a, 1997b) of the new media workplace, providing those subtle links between women's working and home lives.

5.3.1. Research User Group

The first group of women was selected using purposive sampling (Miles and Huberman 1994; Patton 1990) from a pool of women known to have attended a multimedia course run by the WEVH in Manchester. The researcher had previously conducted a survey Walker (2004) looking at women's multimedia training at this organisation so it was known to provide women-only multi-media training. The researcher sought to contact women who had received training from the WEVH on their multi-media training for women in the cultural industries course (MUWIC) (described in 5.3.3. below). This was done using purposive snowball sampling in that two women who had previously worked at the WEVH were asked to identify women who had attended the MUWIC course. These women then identified other women who had been on the course or working in their field. The women's contact details were obtained through emailing women who had previously worked as trainers on the MUWIC course. Having had contact with staff from this course from previous research Walker (2004) this proved to be a very straightforward way to set about contacting women who had previously attended the MUWIC courses. A letter setting out the intentions of the research was given to the trainers to email onto the possible interviewees. This is available in the appendices. The second group of women was identified through sending an email to women who were already networking through their multi-media/arts work and who networked with other women that were known to be involved in new media in Manchester from the work they did. This networking didn't have to be on-line. Again the letter outlining the survey's intentions was sent via email and women responded by sending a return

email. A total of twenty-two women were interviewed; two of these were for the pilot study.

A number of women were involved in the new media industry through sound engineering, video/TV work and on-line radio broadcasting. Other women were front or back-end web designers, members of bands who produced their own music and on-line publicity, women who taught multi-media skills/provided technical support at local colleges/universities, and women who worked in photographic journalism and the games industry.

5.3.2. Data Collection Techniques

5.3.2.1. Design

Henwood (1993) stated that any significant change in the gender-technology relationship would only come about if research focused on individual women's experiences of technology. Stanley and Wise (1983); Code (1988) and Harding (1987) emphasise the need to conduct the research from the perspective of the subject and not the researcher. It is with these ideas of knowledge and how it should be uncovered that informs the research design of this study. Harding (1987) states that it is possible to argue that all evidence-gathering techniques fall into three categories: listening to (or interrogating) informants, observing behaviour, or examining historical traces and records. In this sense, she maintains that there are only three methods of social enquiry. Harding believes that feminists carry out these methods of evidence gathering in very different ways to andocentric researchers. Listening carefully to how women interviewees talk about their lives and men's lives and critically to how social scientists conceptualize women and men's lives are positives that will be taken from standpoint feminism.

5.3.2.2. Interview Schedules

The interview schedule comprised of a series of in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews where each interviewee was asked a total of twenty open-ended questions.

The first set of questions asks how they became interested in new technology with the aim of obtaining an overview of what women considered technology and how this affected their career trajectory. The second set of questions were posed to explore women's lived experiences of the workplace and to find out more about the structure and power dynamics/structure of their place of work and how this affected both their sense of inclusion/exclusion and work/life balance. The third set of questions examined women's understanding of the contemporary workplace in terms of their language and ability to articulate this. How women view their position in workplace, the barriers they face and the conflicts that affect their career prospects were also explored. The fourth set of questions explored the theme of awareness of gender politics/feminism and looks at women's careers and the factors that affect their trajectories and perhaps limit them. The final set of questions relates to networks - types of networks, their role and function and whose networks they are.

5.3.2.3. The Research Instrument

The interview schedule consisted of twenty in-depth open-ended questions, which lasted between forty minutes to one hour on average. A full copy appears in the Appendices. The questions were open-ended to allow interviewees to share their experiences and express their ideas and opinions in depth.

5.3.2.4. Insider Bias

While there could be problems with objectivity due to the researcher having been an employee of the WEVH this issue has been addressed in a number of ways. I think the hardest part of this was that the WEVH did such good work so it was difficult not to acknowledge this and this view isn't just because I was employed there but is down to the consistently good feedback that has been given over the years by women who have worked, trained, sat on the management committee and volunteered there. The survey was designed to be exploratory so that different views may be obtained. I tried not to ask any yes/no type questions and encouraged the interviewee to express their views freely. Women were always encouraged to express their views about the WEVH whether they were positive or negative whilst studying there so this obviously helped, as the interviewees knew that I wanted to hear what they truly felt. Great care was taken with the wording of the survey questions to ensure that they would not be biased towards a positive response. The researcher had an academic supervisor who ensured that this bias was kept to a minimum.

5.3.3. Research Methods: Data analysis

5.3.3.1. Introduction

Here we outline the approach taken to data analysis. It describes the framework for analysis, details how previous research was utilized and outlines the analytic process.

5.3.3.2. Qualitative Analysis

The data analysis framework was set up and tested during the pilot study and was then refined and transferred to the main study.

Firstly, the pilot data was analysed to test the research instruments. A transcription template was developed at this stage to speed up the data processing and increase reliability by ensuring that each interview would be analysed in the same way. In the second phase all interview questions were grouped together in numerical order enabling the researcher to become more familiar with the data and to see the emergence of patterns or links more easily by comparing respondents answers to the same questions. From analysing the responses to the interview questions question-by-question key words and patterns emerged. The third phase was to highlight key sentences from each verbatim interview to be used as quotes and also to be reduced to key words and phrases for the final stage of the analysis. Fourthly, a summary table, adapted from a format suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), comprising of key words and phrases was designed. The matrix recorded key responses from the third phase and allowed the interviewer to observe any emergent patterns. Full transcriptions of each interview were made using a portable digital recorder.

5.4. Pilot Study

The pilot phase of the study was carried out to test the data collection techniques. A total of two women were interviewed. The research design and data collection methods were tested through the analysis of the data collected. Although it seemed like some of the questions were encouraging respondents to repeat themselves I discovered that useful information came out as a result of this. At this point it was felt that the aims and objectives of the study were being met therefore no amendments were made.

5.5. Interviews

Interviewees were contacted by email. Interviewees were also given a phone number to contact me in case they preferred this method of organising. Interviews were set up at a time and place that was most convenient for the women interviewed. The survey sample was made up of ten women who had previously studied at the WEVH and ten women who had not but done a course/courses elsewhere. All twenty women were interviewed face to face at a place of their choice. Interviews were carried out in women's homes, studios, car, cafes and bars.

5.5.1. The Interview - Data Processing

All interviews were transcribed in full because of the exploratory nature of the research. This proved to be very worthwhile as some interviews, which seemed quite rambling at times, contained valuable information in sections of the interview where they might have gone unnoticed. Partial transcription may have left this data hidden. In addition, the exploratory nature of the study meant that themes would emerge from the data and it was not possible to predict where these themes would emerge. There were a total of twenty-two interviews transcribed including the pilot interviews with each interview lasting approximately forty to sixty minutes. Transcription took approximately four times the length of the interview or more. This meant that on average each interview took 3.5 hours to transcribe.

Firstly, all interviews were analysed in stages question by question. The framework for coding was generated from the literature search, which identified some key themes (long hours culture, dependent issues etc.) Other themes were added (for example on-going training requirements, life/ work balance etc.) based on the focus

of the study. This provided the loose framework for the first stage of the key information to be inserted. The first stage involved finding the key information and identifying it by highlighting it as key data. The second stage reduced this information to key words or phrases. A matrix was then designed showing these second level descriptive words/phrases allowing the researcher to compare the responses.

The table 5.1 shows the first and second stages to coding the data.

First Level Coding	Second Level Coding
Int7 Well, I've always used it with work, particularly with events because the events market was getting really flooded, so it was looking at new ways to reach audiences in such a competitive market, traditional marketing wasn't really working any more. So, looking at ways to let people know and how to get your information out first and in an innovative way.	New market

Table 5.2 shows the correlation of data to show the percentage of each group as well as the percentage of both groups together.

Table 5.2

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Own time	100	100	100
Training on-going	90	10	95
Teaching self	80	100	90
Work time/Paid	30	20	25
Pay for self	0	30	15
Don't have time	20	10	15
Same training as men	20	10	15

Table 5.3 shows the differences from comparing the number of same responses from WEVH and non-WEVH women

Response	WEVH %	non-WEVH %	Difference
Own time	100	100	0
Training on-going	90	100	10
Teaching self	80	100	20
Work time/Paid	30	10	20
Pay for self	0	30	20
Don't have time	20	10	10
Same training as men	20	10	10

5.5.2. Data Recording

All interviewees agreed to have their interview recorded using an unobtrusive digital recorder. The research analysis required that the whole of the interview was available for transcription and detailed analysis therefore recording the interview was essential. This also enabled the interviews to be conducted rather seamlessly, as the interviewer didn't have to take notes.

5.6. Ethical Issues

Respondents were informed that the information given would be confidential and that their anonymity would be protected. Some of the respondents said that there was no need for this. However, confidentiality and anonymity was maintained.

Interviewees' names were changed and the interview data was stored on a secure drive with only the interviewer having access to the information. Demographic data was taken from the interviewees at the end of their interview and was transcribed and stored in the same file as their interview. Respondents were informed that this would be done and that it would not affect their anonymity.

5.7. Study Limitations

This study provided a snapshot in time of the experiences of the women from both groups. The interviews took place over two months to allow women to choose times to suit their schedules. The survey sample was quite small due to limited resources.

5.8. Problems Encountered

One of the main difficulties was in ensuring that all the interviewees could be interviewed in one of two time blocks due to the fact that I now live in Cornwall and my research is Manchester based. Two women cancelled at the last minute but fortunately a former WEVH tutor managed to put me in contact with some replacements that were already on my list of potential interviewees just in time. Due to the relatively small scene in Manchester it was also apparent that women were trying to be as careful as possible so as not to identify other people that they were

having issues with as I may know them so it became clear quite quickly that I would have to be very forthcoming in my assurances that the interviews would be strictly confidential. Finance was also an issue as travelling back and forward to Manchester from Cornwall isn't cheap. I also found that some women were quite shy about disclosing information about their salary and also their sexuality. The matrixes did not have a built in counter, which meant this had to be done manually.

5.9. Reliability and Validity

Only having one researcher working on the coding facilitated coding, reliability and validity across the survey. Validity of the research methods was tested at the pilot stage and was found to be satisfactory. Whilst transferability was not one of the main outcomes of this study other researchers could utilize the research methods outlined in the chapter.

5.10. Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the research methods used for the data analysis of this study including problems encountered and measures taken to ensure reliability and validity. Sections 5.1 describes in detail the steps taken to ensure that the information was processed and analysed in a methodical way using a summary table, adapted from a format suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). Using summary tables enabled the recording of key responses from the third phase of analysis to establish emergent patterns. Section 5.2 highlighted problems encountered with the methodology such as the matrixes not having a built-in counter, which meant this had to be done manually. Section 5.3 describes how reliability and validity were

facilitated through having one researcher working on the coding throughout the survey.

The research methods were outlined in detail in this chapter so that the processes would be transparent and could easily be verified. Validity of the research methods was tested at the pilot stage and was found to be satisfactory. While transferability was not one of the main outcomes of this study other researchers could utilize the research methods outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 6

6. Survey Results: Experience and Impact of Training

6.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the results relating to the first theme of this research, women's experience of training. A group of twenty women working in the new media industry were interviewed with most of them working full time in the industry whether that be with one job or a combination of jobs. Just over half were self-employed and the majority of those employed by others were working in the public sector mainly in Further/Higher Education. Most of the women had come through an arts based background and 'discovered' new media. They were still very much involved in the artistic side of the industry although two of them mixed this up with software engineering and sound engineering. Almost all of the women were in senior positions and those that were self-employed were their own boss or worked collaboratively with one or two others. The highest paid woman was an events consultant earning 50K with the lowest an artist/sound facilitator/ engineer earning nothing partly due to health issues. Five of my interviewees are dyslexics, another was blind and one woman suffered from chronic pain.

This research explores how women became interested in technology and new media and whether they had been supported or hindered along the way. The theme was addressed using three questions: how did women become interested in new media? Did the course prepare women for their work environment? Was their training for work on-going?

The main differences that were highlighted from the first question were that non-WEVH women were more likely to have been self-taught with communications and music being their route into new media whereas WEVH women mentioned feminism more. Having a need to build a web site or promote their business if they were self-employed was common to both groups. Both groups of women were also excited about the new opportunities that technology might bring and saw the Internet as a new way of expanding their work-base. Although non-WEVH women mentioned communications and the internet 70% more than WEVH women this didn't seem that surprising as the WEVH women received internet training as an integral part of their course during the mid-90s before the internet had really taken off (Walker 2005) whereas the majority of the non-WEVH women had difficulty in finding the right course resulting in their access to the Internet being restricted due lack of knowledge, access and finance. This is similar to the findings of Gill (2002). For a good number of Afro-Caribbean and Asian WEVH women who had attended WEVH courses prior to MUWIC, access to the internet/email facilities was pre-world wide web therefore their initial experience of it was more about communication in that it enabled them to communicate with their family and friends in other countries and to have access to cultural information that would have been difficult to access due to the high cost of computer equipment, software and telephone bills (Walker 2004). WEVH women mentioned feminism more although both groups were of a similar age so this didn't appear to be a factor (McRobbie 2004). It would seem that for some their feminism was part of the decision making process that brought them to the WEVH and for all of the WEVH women a set of values that were an integral part of their course (Dyson 2003; Walker 2004) that

affected their career decision making process more so than non-WEVH women vocalised.

The second question to address the first theme showed in every 'positive' mention that more WEVH women felt that aside from the technical aspects of their learning, the course had prepared them in other ways for their work environment (Ellen and Herman 2005) and that for some their course had meant that they could lead a more 'alternative' lifestyle rather than the usual nine to five office based job which was seen to be too restrictive not only in terms of being tied to the desk but in terms of cultural values and norms (Wharton 2005). This 'alternative' way of working does also have its problems (Pratt 2000; Gill 2002, 2007; Wyatt and Henwood 2000; Banks and Milestone 2011). WEVH women mentioned that they'd been encouraged by other women on their course that their course was technically great and that as well as gaining transferable skills their course had also increased their confidence levels. Non-WEVH women mentioned all of these benefits but to a lesser extent apart from transferable skills which they didn't mention at all.

The third question relating to this theme revealed that for both sets of women, training was on-going, done in their own time and that they were basically learning on the job as and as and when time allowed. Gill (2007) found that the majority of new media workers she interviewed by far preferred the informality of learning on the job. All of the women found keeping up with their training difficult due to lack of time and money (Gill 2002, 2007; Richards and Milestone 2000). For those women that were self-employed taking time out to train meant that they not only had to pay for the training but that they suffered loss of income due to not working whilst training which is why they preferred to learn on the job. The nature of the training for both groups came down to whatever the job required; few were paid to train (Gill

2002) and for those that were not self-employed and had training as part of their job description their ability to utilise this opportunity was seriously undermined by their workload.

The first set of questions of the survey relating to experience of training were posed to explore women's initial experiences of technology/new media and to see how this and the degree to which they were supported had an effect on their career trajectory. Women were asked how they became interested in new technology with the aim of obtaining an overview of what they considered technology and how this affected their career trajectory. The question of whether they had been prepared for the work environment in any other way aside from technically was asked to try and establish if women were being made aware of gender relations in the workplace through their training courses and what the differences were between their expectations if they had any and their work environment. Finally, on-going training requirements were examined to find out whether women had on-going training needs, how this was being supported in terms of both time and finance and whether women had the same opportunities as their male colleagues.

An open approach to data gathering was taken because a central principle of the research design was to examine women's lived experiences of the workplace. To achieve this it was important that all of their individual experiences were talked rather than limiting their responses. Limiting women's responses would have given a distorted view of what they consider to be important experiences from their point of view. Whilst this approach meant that a large amount of data was captured it also meant that it was done in an unbiased way.

6.1. Initial Experiences of Technology

Women were asked ‘how did you become interested in new media?’

This can include your early interests, through school, college, work and an interest in technology.

[Then] Were you supported along the way or hindered?’

This question generated twenty-one responses. The second column of table 6.1 shows the percentage of WEVH women citing the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the reason in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

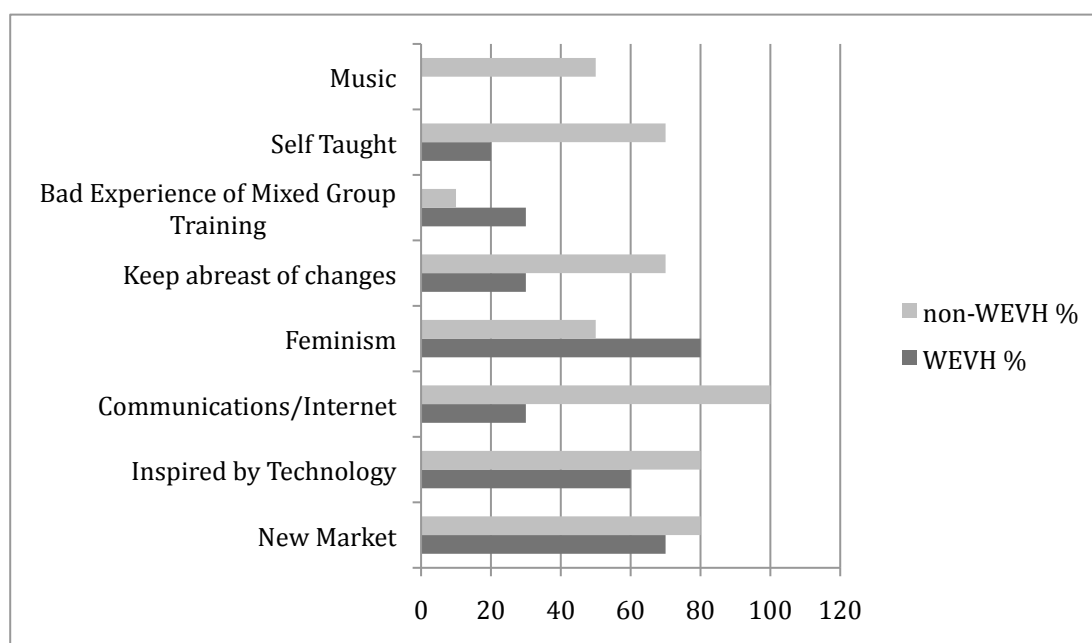
Table 6.1 How did you become interested in new media?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Personal Development	100	100	100
New market	70	80	75
Inspired by Tech	60	80	70
Comms/Internet	30	100	65
Feminism /Reading	80	50	65
Be pioneer	50	60	55
Were Supported	60	50	55
Keep abreast of changes	30	70	50
Self taught	20	70	45
Art Work	60	30	45
Work Experience	40	50	45
Lack resources	40	40	40
Film/Graphics/Print	30	40	35
Music	0	50	25
Bad experience work/course	30	10	20
HE Course	10	30	20
Post Grad	10	20	15
Friend/colleague	20	10	15
WEA/IDEA	10	10	10
MUWIC-MMU	0	10	5
WEVH	70	0	—

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 6.1 are summarised below in table 6.1b and show in general that women have

accessed the industry by numerous non-traditional routes and that their path is not straightforward with this being largely due to both their family commitments (Ellen and Herman 2005) and their passion and enthusiasm for their work (Gill 2002; 2007). 50% of non-WEVH women came through the music route with the new media field being seen as the lesser of the two evils in terms of the difficulties women face when trying to network in a patriarchal, heteronormative culture where the social norms and values reflect upon the workplace and vice versa (Richards and Milestone 2000; Banks and Milestone 2011). Over 50% more non-WEVH women experienced difficulties on mixed gender courses, an issue that has been raised by a number of commentators although the debate around positive action and mainstreaming continues (Rees 1998; Girbash 1991; Dyson 2003; Walker 2005).

Table 6.1b How did you become interested in new media?



The largest difference between the two groups of women is the mention of communication technologies/internet at 70% for being why women became interested in new media. 100% of non-WEVH women mention this whereas only

30% of WEVH women did. For Int4 the Internet became a way for her to access other cultures and to keep in touch with current events back in her home country:

“I became a mother and in those days this Internet was really new, everyone was talking about it but for me it was a really abstract thing and I couldn't understand what it was but I kept hearing about it. I started becoming interested and also it was amusing, you can talk to people all around the world or you can read your daily newspapers, especially Turkish newspapers for me.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

50% of non-WEVH women mentioned music as being their reason with no WEVH women mentioning it at all. There is also a 50% difference with being self-taught.

70% of non-WEVH women mention being self-taught and not wanting to be left behind with only 20% of WEVH women being self taught and 30% saying they didn't want to be left behind.

For Int11 her music led her to the internet which in turn led her on to be a new media developer:

“That was actually through music as well because I was actually writing and performing at the time and the internet was just taking off and I needed to get some stuff online so I just learnt how to do it, really enjoyed it and it ended up becoming my paid work.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int18's need to word process led her to by chance becoming a multi-media artist and trainer. Through having access to some software at University In18 became self-taught:

“It was probably on my first degree and I failed my first assignment. My degree was contemporary dance and visual arts so I was kind of combining the art forms and I was kind of told about the computer room and went to try and use the computer to rewrite my essay and luckily, from failing with it I passed it with a first, the essay itself! So, then I used the room constantly to do word processing and it was in the CDT dept. it wasn't even in the arts and crafts, then, they didn't have any computers then but in the same room, there was a computer, I think it was an acorn and they did 3-D drawing and what was similar to Photoshop. Because it was a performance degree, I started using it to make posters, so made posters and flyers for the performances in the degree and became quite good at it and it became like my second home, if

you like. But because they were so expensive I didn't really concentrate on that as a form of work at the time, I just use it as a subsidiary to my degree because I thought, they're really expensive, I'm not going to be able to afford one or do this work when I leave, so even though I was really good at it and everyone was saying you should go into computer work because you're really good, so like 'I say, I didn't think I could afford it because they were really expensive, big computers then.'" (43-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Feminism was mentioned by 80% of the WEVH women and by 50% of non-WEVH women. It's interesting that for the WEVH women feminism was what brought them to the WEVH, a women only new media/ICT training centre whereas the non-WEVH women were mostly self taught and came through the music route i.e. from working in the music industry as sound engineers, djs, and making music. These non-WEVH women on the whole chose to be taught in mixed sex environments whereas the WEVH women having been inspired by their feminist principles sought out the WEVH, a women-only environment. Women-only environments have been documented as being sites of conflict for some women due to the way some men can interpret this as a sign that they may be lesbian/bi-sexual resulting in some women being put off attending same sex classes for fear of ridicule (Henwood, Plumerage and Stepulevage 2000).

In this quote Int20 talks about how she wanted to become mistress of all the equipment and it was through the feminist scene in Berlin that she did so:

"It was thanks to a woman that I learnt how to use a computer; I was a bit scared of how to use computers, actually. Music-wise I really liked using all the drum machines and the old stuff but there was a friend in Berlin. She helped me get over that barrier and then I had to go to really nice fellas to finish it off, during that mastering process, I was surrounded by all this really nice kit and I thought I want to mistress all this! Then I thought it's a dirty job, someone's got to start to redress the balance because they would quite openly say, there are no mastering engineers that are female and they'd really like to work with more women but they're not going there for some reason.

So I thought 'right, time to get started' and then I found a course in Manchester and then got really into that side of it.” (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

With both groups there was a high mention of the ‘new market’ (70% WEVH and 80% non-WEVH). 60% WEVH also mentioned being inspired by technology, as did 70% of non-WEVH women.

Int5 talks about the changing radio scene and how on-line broadcasting began a new career for her:

“So, I wasn't really sure what to expect I began hosting a weekly show on there and because it was broadcast online we started getting listeners from all over the place and we were playing some quite specialist stuff and it was just after John Peel's death cause I'd always been a big John Peel fan, which is another reason why it seemed such an amazing thing that someone should come up to me and ask me if I wanted to do some radio. Because I'd just been still mourning the loss of John Peel and people were beginning to look for new ways of finding music online, new radio shows online and it was right at the beginning of the whole podcast thing. So I just happened to be at the right place at the right time and lots of people started listening to the show and it became the most listened to show on the station.” (25-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int7 is involved with events marketing and realised that there had to be other ways to reach her market in an increasingly competitive climate:

“Well, I've always used it with work, particularly with events because the events market was getting really flooded, so it was looking at new ways to reach audiences in such a competitive market, traditional marketing wasn't really working any more. So, looking at ways to let people know and how to get your information out first and in an innovative way.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

All of the women here talk about their individual experiences of how becoming involved with computers changed their lives. Gill (2007) also found that *‘people working with new media have an extraordinary passion and enthusiasm for the field. This goes beyond individual projects, and frequently relates to the broader development of the Web and Web culture as a whole. Six broad features of new*

media work were highlighted to account for the love it engenders. These related to the opportunities it offered for autonomy and entrepreneurship, the playful and pleasurable nature of the work, the chances it offered to innovate, its potential as a medium for communication, its opportunities for community and political activism, and the 'coolness' of the industry.' Gill (2007: 6)

Int14 mentions the cost of filming being radically reduced making filmmaking more accessible for her:

“I've always been interested in it, it's kind of in my nature, I like technology and I like the way it moves along so quickly and because I'm quite innovative as well, it excites me, what's coming out, next?” (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int14's comment is interesting because she says that she likes the way that technology changes so quickly. It has often been argued that women are the victims of technology and that technology itself is driven by capitalism and men (Berg 1997 chap. 1). This is clearly a more complex matter and one that is discussed in detail by Cockburn (1983) where she states that one has to understand relations between men as well as between women and men in order to make sense of the position of women and by Faulkner (1991) where technology is understood as socially shaped and thus potentially re-shapeable. This understanding of gender-technology relations thus allows for the often contradictory views of some of the women here including Int14 as changes in technology are exciting but in order to take advantage and be at the fore-front of this innovation women must be in a position to do so and having the time and money is crucial. Too often women are forced to take on other work like teaching to supplement their own work, more so than men (Gill 2002).

Int11:

“I’ve always been into computers, since I was a kid. I mean I got into computer programming when I was quite young; my uncle had a company called ‘Computers Link’. It was around the time of Sinclair and the ZX81.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

The above comment from Int11 is interesting, as it was also clear that she was quite a masculine identified woman. She was a lesbian and on the ‘butch’ end of the spectrum. Her new media specialism fell into the ‘hard’ end of new media work spectrum in that she was a programmer as well as a sound specialist. So, again although it is often the case that women and girls don’t have the same access to computing there are also those women who either actively seek it out (Henwood 1996: 6).

Int16:

“Well, the reason that I couldn’t work in film and that was in the late 80s was because it was impossible because I was a woman, I was a production manager at the film co-op and it was just a very male-dominated industry. I don’t really know if film has changed a lot but I don’t really know how it is for women really. I didn’t like that part of the industry where it costs a lot of money, so it’s all very precious so we can’t give anybody a chance or anything but that’s really changed a lot cause you can shoot an HD movie on your Canon stills camera, you know.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int16 makes an interesting point about technology becoming more accessible with its cost having been drastically reduced. This also highlights that although technology can be seen to be driven by capitalism, the benefits of this are that the ordinary people, especially women can now have access to equipment that they wouldn’t have been allowed to touch let alone ‘play’/work with in the past due its high cost and the benefits in terms of finance that it brings (Cockburn 1983; McNeil 1987).

Int14:

“By chance, a bit really because when I studied, back in the 80s there wasn’t much new media around and there were no courses like you have them today, like Media Design, Interactive Arts, whatever. I studied film and television and I was always more interested in the more performative aspect of this, obviously and then I gradually slipped into new media projects after my exam

through meeting the right people at the right time.” (46-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int14 talks about meeting the right people at the right time in the 80s when she was obviously a much younger woman. She has also criticised this informal networking later on in the interview saying that it was difficult for women to meet up in bars and clubs late at night as it could be seen as them being sexually available (Richards and Milestone 2000).

Int19:

“I was the second woman to have gone through there, called ACAT, the Australian Centre for Art and Technology and did one year, full time, a computer animation post-graduate degree working with omega computers, when I finished in 1993, that was at a crux when Macintosh came into education, we still had the old Epsom? Boxes and Photoshop 1, we did a lot of web stuff, text based, muds and moos. I remember the first time at that point 92/3, you could start using image tags in web design, I got very excited again about moving image and then of course interactivity was presented to me, so not only could I animate my still photography, I could make other people interact with that storyline. And I would say during that time 92/93.” (41-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int19 was one of several dyslexic women in this interview all of whom discuss being excited by the visual image or sound and who have been attracted to new media perhaps because of this. The connection between new media and dyslexia is something that I would like to look into further.

6.2. Dominant Gender Relations

Women were asked ‘aside from the technical aspect of the training, do you think that it has prepared you in any way for the work environment and in what way?

[Then] What are the differences in your expectations and the reality of the social aspect of the environment?’

This question generated eighteen responses from the women. The second column of table 6.2 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning these responses and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses are ranked (column3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

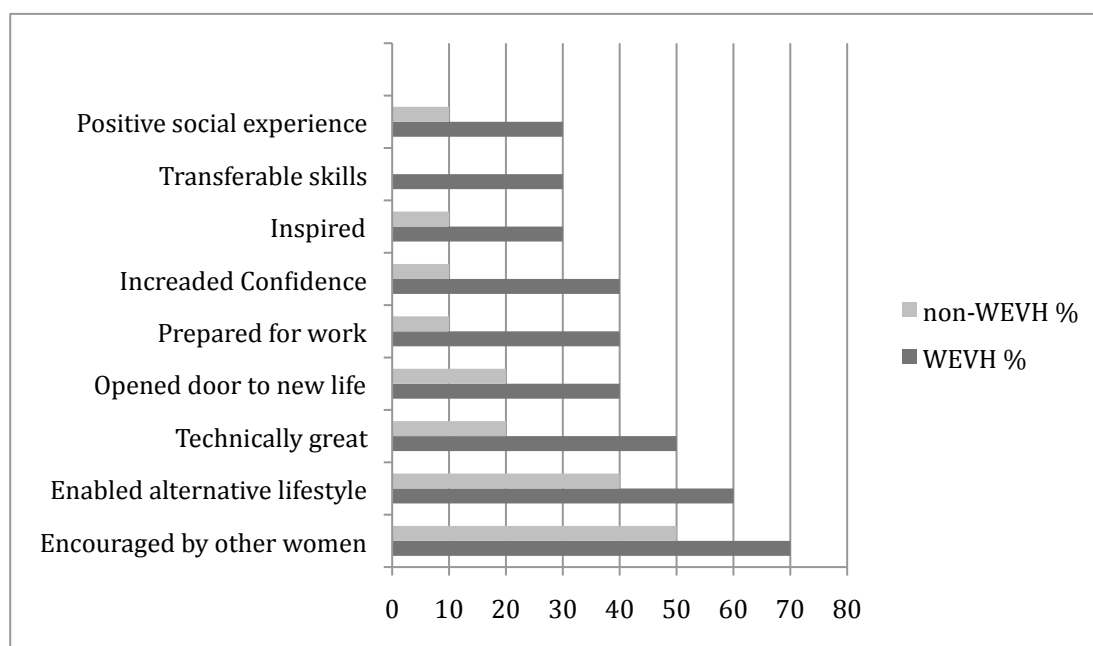
Table 6.2 Aside from the technical aspect of the training; do you think that it has prepared you in any way for the work environment and in what way?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Encouraged by other women	70	50	60
Enabled Alt lifestyle	60	40	50
Technical great	50	20	35
Opened door to new life	40	20	30
Prepared Work	40	10	30
Confidence	40	10	25
Inspired/excited	30	10	20
On-line enriching life	20	20	20
Trans skills	30	0	15
Ideas	20	10	15
Social experience on course great	30	0	15
Mixed training problematic	10	10	10
Support from outside	0	20	10
NM not delivered its promise	2	0	10
Learned to work 24/7		20	10
No prep for mix work group	10	10	10
Went onto p/g it course	10	0	5
Equipped to do all jobs	10	0	5

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 6.2 are summarised below in table 6.2b and show on the whole that the WEVH women's training had a more positive effect on a greater number of women than the courses that the non-WEVH women had attended (Dyson 2003; Walker 2005). A high percentage of both groups did receive support from other women and their training had enabled them to access an alternative exciting lifestyle and the fact that

for some their formal training not preparing them for their work role merely ‘prepared’ them for a work life where learning on the job is the norm (Gill 2007).

Table 6.2b Aside from the technical aspect of the training, do you think that it has prepared you in any way for the work environment and in what way?



The differences for this question were less marked with the largest being 30%. 30 % more WEVH women mentioned their course being technically great, being prepared for work and that their course had instilled confidence in them. These differences between the two groups were some of the main reasons the WEVH was set up (Girbash 1991). The feasibility study carried out on behalf of the Pankhurst Centre

(see chapter 2) showed that women wanted to be trained by other women because they had little or no confidence in their male tutors' abilities to make their training an enjoyable and beneficial experience (Girbash 1991; Spender 1995; Walker 2005)

In response to this question Int1 talks about how doing her MSc put her ahead of the game both technically and in terms of ideas although she had her reservations about some of its earlier promises.

“Ahead of the game technically but also in ideas I've always been quite critical of what New Media has promised, I don't know if this is what you mean or not. So theoretically NM always promised an awful lot of things, freedom, democracy, participation, collaboration and whilst I think that some of those things are definitely implicit in new media I personally have always been very critical of that, it's an ideology that I disagree with.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

Both Perry and Greber (1990, cited in Henwood 1993) and Henwood (1993) suggest that there may be no real gains for the position of women in relation to technology and Henwood (1993: 43) goes onto say that *‘It could equally well be that once these newly-discovered attributes of flexibility, intuition etc. are revealed and become sought after skills in computing, men will be the first in-line to demonstrate their competence in these fields.’* Banks and Milestone (2011) although acknowledging the difficulties and disappointments with new media still think that there is hope: -

‘Particularly in the case of new media and other cultural industries, perhaps the time is ripe for further reassessment of how far new forms of work rely on old patterns of discrimination and exploitation. This is possible without overlooking the very real progress made by strongly motivated and reflexive women producers who have been able to take at least some advantage of the ambivalent qualities of cultural workplace transformation.’ (Banks and Milestone 2011: 15)

Henwood, Plumerage and Stepulevage (2000) and Ellen and Herman (2005) show that mainstream computer training and education is problematic in many ways for women including their constant undermining by men. As Letts (2001) shows this masculinist and hetero-normative understanding of technology begins in our primary schools.

Int20, a musician, talks about how being on a course that was male dominated prepared her for the world of work:

“It has, in a way! In a way it prepares you but not in a good way for that sexism but often, actually in a professional environment it's not there because people are just getting on with their jobs. You know there's A*****, in C****, the guy who runs that, you probably know him A**** he used to work at ***** and they're just decent guys and it's never...I just keep anticipating that they think I'm being a daft girl and you can tell that they just don't think like that. They think you're an engineer, you do your job, you do it well, we all make mistakes and that's it really. I think that you're anticipating that people are judging you in that way but actually a lot of the time, they're not, as an engineer anyway, I would say.”

Interviewer: So, did you have certain expectations and is the reality not quite that?

“From the college course, yeah definitely you get your fisticuffs up when actually you didn't need to and you get quite defensive, I think it's being defensive really and getting ready for that question, that debate which I do still get in interviews, which is the classic, 'what's it like being a woman doing what you do?' and I'd be like, I'm quite used to being a woman by now, I've been doing it for a few years, I've got the hang of it most of the time!” (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int20 alludes to a her training environment being both sexist and misogynistic, issues that have been flagged up by Henwood (1996: 3) where she quotes one of the male tutors in a Higher Education College as saying that ‘*women can't have it all*’ and even calling them ‘*page 3 bitches*’! The women in this interview would have been receiving their training around this time when it was quite clear that this level of misogyny was commonplace.

Int13 talks about how being involved with new media from the beginning gave her confidence in that she could talk with authority using the jargon and to this day she still has contact with the women from her course:

“The course was quite fast paced, I prefer to have a lot of one to one and there wasn't a lot of that, the course was quite big. But it was great because it gave me confidence because I knew the terminology of things and that is a massive boost because so many times jargon is off-putting for people, male and female. Whether that puts you inside or outside of the circle. So, that was great because I could speak with authority about...sounding authoritative about this stuff... Because we didn't know it at the time but we were at the really exciting beginnings of something massive which if I'd not been part of at that particular time I could have missed out completely. So looking back that was actually a really pivotal thing and I'm still in touch with some of those women.

I was going into a music company environment, which was male dominated and most of the guys had come from a technical background in terms on making music or djing and using technology for that purpose but they didn't know about this technology so I was the person who would go back to be the champion for that...” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int13's comment here is one that Walker (2005) discusses as being one of the most important factors about community and alternative training. Int13 took part in the original MUWIC course (see 2.4) that was run at Manchester Metropolitan University in the mid 1990s. This initiative would have been highly criticised by Rees (2000) as the course was taken from a mainstream education establishment to be run as a voluntary sector project - the WEVH (see chapter 3). It is clear from this woman's statement that like many of the women who took part in the WEVH programme being a 'pioneer' did indeed have its benefits in that knowledge is power, especially technical knowledge and for this reason many women are attracted to it (Hacker, cited in Henwood 1996).

The WEVH women mentioned the support of other women - 'encouraged by other women', 'enabled alternative lifestyle', 'opened door to new life', 'inspired/excited', 'transferable skills' and 'positive social experience' on their course - 20% more than

the non-WEVH women. The women here talk about how supportive their training environment was at the WEVH and how being around like minded women in a caring and sharing environment helped them to make the most of their knowledge and skills in the workplace. Being in a women only space is something that not all women are allowed to feel comfortable with. In their study of a Higher Education set-up Henwood, Plumerage and Stepulevage (2000) found that women-only modules in computer studies courses were problematic for women because of men's homophobic attitudes, which has led to a number of women not taking up these options in the Higher Education System. This could be in part why some of the women in this survey did not attend the WEVH or want to reveal that this was their reason. Throughout society hetero-normative patriarchal behaviour that discourages women-only space serves to disempower women and prevent them from opportunities that most men take for granted (Richards and Milestone 2000).

Int9:

“No, I think it was wholly supported, particularly because there weren't many women within that realm, at that time. There are more women now, but I think when I did it, over 10 years ago, now there weren't many women who were pushed into the technical side or the application/software or even hardware, that wasn't pushed. So, that was supportive because you were with like-minded women and you were learning and sharing skills with each other in a supportive environment and I think that was really important in terms of your own development and also that network of women. Now I'm still in touch with some of those women who are working in that field. I suppose the social side of it is around networking which I think is really important, I think that kind of environment where you can meet like minded women or people, it is the kind of social aspect and that kind of allows you or enables you to kind of use that kind of knowledge and take it into the workspace or at least have some experience and feel confident that you can go into the workspace with the skills that you've got or the knowledge that you've got and have some kind of support, as well.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Rees (2000) talks about the benefits of Positive Action Projects (see 2.2) in that they can and in the case of the WEVH was a creative laboratory where as Int9 puts it *'like*

mindful creative women could come together, share their knowledge and skills, be supportive of one another and in return create some very important work.' Int9 has gone on to set up a major creative public sector initiative and in this respect Rees (2000) criticism of Voluntary sector 'positive action' projects as only benefitting the few is completely wrong as a number of women have gone on to establish projects that benefit more than just themselves and indeed in Int9's case a whole community have benefited.

Int10:

"Oh, supported, totally, it was a very supportive environment. Obviously, you know about the EVH, do you want me to say, what the EVH was? I think because it was an all-female environment, it made a huge difference. I've been on a few other courses in a mixed environment and I felt that the men kind of took over a bit and were quite overpowering and I felt that being in an all female environment really helped.

I10: It did in a sense, cause I did a project with a guy and built a website, back then I think that really helped me to see what it would be like working for somebody rather than just building sites as part of the course because I had to go out and meet with the guy whose website I was building and get feedback and I could see that how much work was involved, so that definitely helped." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int10 cites one of the key elements of the WEVH MUWIC programme (see 2.4) being the work placements that women went on as part of their course (Walker 2005). This gave women a valuable insight into the new media industry and clearly prepared them both mentally and technically for their working environment.

6.3. Meeting On-going Training Requirements

Women were asked 'is your training for your work on going?

[Then] How is this supported - financially/time/personal development?

[Then] Do you have the same opportunities as male colleagues, if not why not?

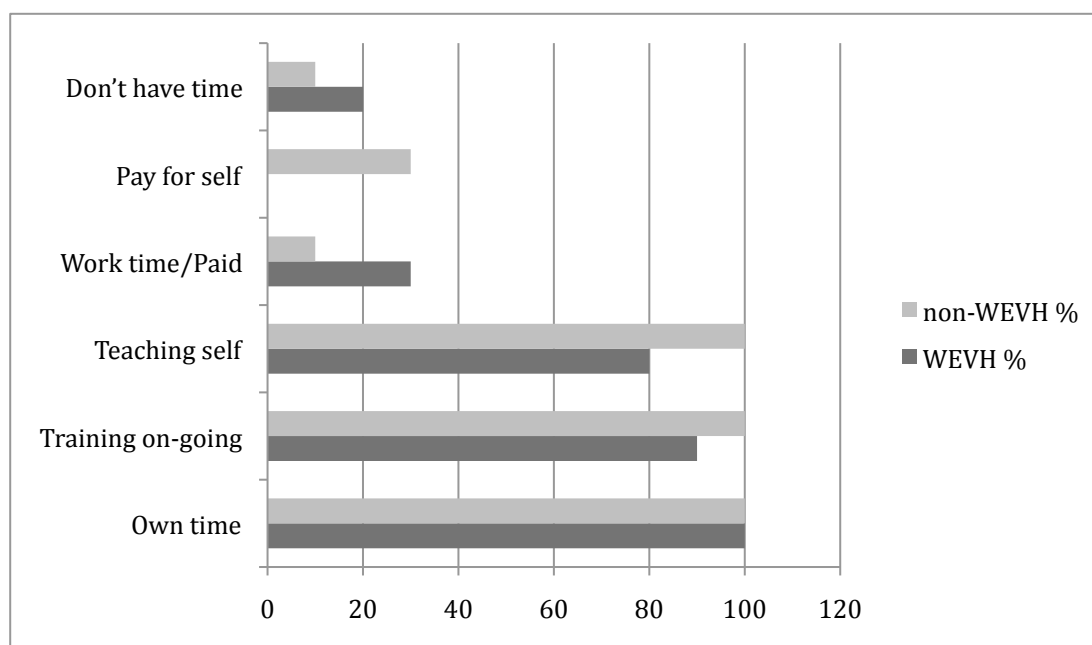
This question generated seven different responses listed in table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3 Is your training for your work on-going?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Own time	100	100	100
Training on-going	90	10	95
Teaching self	80	100	90
Work time/Paid	30	20	25
Pay for self	0	30	15
Don't have time	20	10	15
Same training as men	20	10	15

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 6.3 are shown below in table 6.3b.

Table 6.3b Is your training for your work on-going?



The differences here were not very marked with only a 10% or 20% difference between the two groups however one of the most outstanding results was that 80% of WEVH women and 90% of non-WEVH women said that they didn't have the same training as men. There was a very low percentage for both sets of women that had training paid for by their workplace. Training for both groups was on-going and in

their own time with the majority of women training themselves if they had the time. On-going training was clearly the main issue here, Castells (1996, 2000) with self employed women bearing the brunt of this as training means taking time out from earning as well as having to pay for the training itself (Gill 2007). All of the women questioned in this survey mentioned that training was in their own time and that it had to be done if they wanted to keep abreast of things. Some of the women mention here that the learning is often done as required depending on what job they are doing i.e. they are learning on the job and as necessary saving both time and money. One of the main observations here was that self-employed women often took into account the personal development potential of new business as the training costs could be built in and this was a major consideration given their lack of time and budget for training that is constantly in need of updating.

For interviewee 13 training was clearly seen as her responsibility with no input from her employers. This is not uncommon and given that most people work incredibly long hours this added expectation only leads to increased anxiety (Gill 2007: 24).

Int13:

“Not really, I pick up skills through osmosis and working with other people and being out of my comfort zone. I don't have any formal training from my employers.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Interviewer:

“How is that managed financially, is it personal time, is it done in your own free time?”

Int13:

“I would love to do more training and skills development but the only one I paid for myself.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

As stated previously Int13 attended the first MUWIC course at MMU and was the first person in the organisation that she worked for then to have multimedia skills

which she did in her own time. It is now almost fifteen years later and she is still paying for/arranging her own training despite being in full time paid employment.

Below, the comments from Int11 also show that coupled with this extra anxiety comes guilt all too common with women when they are forced into a position where there really is no choice. This is all too common for self-employed women although there was no real difference between the two groups when it came to how self-employed women approached their training needs. The main difference between the two groups was that more WEVH women chose to be employed which given the training and work placements arranged by the WEVH this could have been a positive choice to ensure that their training needs were met (Walker 2004).

Int11:

“It has to be, I just learn as I go along and if I have to do something different for a few months, it's really difficult coming back into because everything has changed. Just learning all the time, you can get left behind really quickly with web work.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Interviewer:

“And how do you support this financially or with time, etc?”

Int11:

“I just do it as I go along but if I have to learn something new I end up paying for it by not being able to charge on for it because it's taken too long. I can't charge usual rates so I do end up paying for it.

Yes, I mainly do it in my own time; I mainly do it through art projects. So I'll probably come up with an idea and then work out how to do it. So it's that old art approach which is very different to some of your more formal approaches. No, and I think if we're really honest it's because we think we should know everything.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

90% of WEVH women and 100% of non-WEVH women said that their training was on going. Training is seen to be essential yet the need for on-going training is problematic (Castells 1996, 2000). Even if there is the will to ensure that employees are kept up to date the time factor also comes into play and there is often just not enough time. Having both the time and the money are the issues here. Women who

had training built into their job contracts often didn't have the time to actually do it in work time so again despite being employed for a set amount of time this requirement to keep abreast of new developments meant that women who were employed were often overworked due to having to take work/training home with them. This is in keeping with the research carried out by Gill, (2007) where she also found that there was an enormous pressure on individuals to ensure that their skills were continually updated.

Int18:

“Yes, a lot of it and because it's media and media is constantly updating itself, the hardware is always updating and the software is updating, you have to constantly be on top of that.” (43-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Interviewer:

“And how is this supported financially and time-wise? Do you have to do that yourself?”

Int18:

“I have to; I have to all the time, every time. Yeah, there is a willing. I mean I work in education so there is a mandate for us to be able to retrain or up train but often, there is so much working that there is never any time to do that so you have to be willing to do it in your spare time. Not everyone is willing to do that, I do have a capacity to do a bit more, I always do a bit extra but I've always done that, cause I enjoy it and I see the benefit of it and I suppose I'm a bit of a perfectionist because I want to make a really good product because it reflects on me then and I want to be seen and I think that definitely comes across in my employment because it was a maternity cover and they created a job for me! In theory, we have an entitlement. I work for a university and it's... we have a good team system and in theory we have 4 hours a week, say to do training for yourself.” (43-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Here it can be seen that Int18 sees updating her training skills as her responsibility, that she is the perfectionist and in being like this she has ensured that her employers have created a post for her. This kind of analysis is at odds with a later comment that she makes in respect to female and male artists in that she points out that many male multimedia artists reap the benefits of earlier work done in conjunction with a female

partner who then takes time out to have children never to return to that point let alone the point her partner/ex-partner has reached since her career break to have their children (Walker 2004).

80% of WEVH women and 100% of non-WEVH women mentioned that they taught themselves.

Int6 talks about how teaching herself is on-going and that she also has to pay for it.

Unlike Gill (2007: 7) where she her new media workers had '*A belief in the essentially egalitarian nature of the field of new media is strong, and many people believed that no one was underrepresented or disadvantaged.*' Int6 also cites that there is a discrepancy in the training and how her male colleagues are treated in comparison to her.

Int6:

"It's ongoing to a point of me still teaching myself things but it's me teaching myself or it's me booking a course and it's just me because I work for myself because no-one will pay for it. When I did have a job there was the occasional bit of training paid for but not much, really. I need to learn from other people." (49-year-old WEVH)

Interviewer:

"Did you feel as if you had the same training opportunities as your male colleagues, when you were employed?"

"Probably, probably, to a point. It was more to do with the encouragement. The confidence that they gave you or didn't, the encouragement that they gave you or didn't. The lads always got more...people listened to them; people would come in the room and talk to the bloke about something, even if they were..."

Interviewer:

"Your subordinate?"

"Yeah, yeah." (49-year-old WEVH)

Int6 is a self identified lesbian woman who in the main has been self employed although often working for a big company. At the age of forty-nine she still has to

pay for her training, which is on-going, and she lies about her age so that the company that she works with don't discriminate against her. The new media industry is fast moving and although this has obvious benefits like the price of equipment coming down it also places a large amount of stress on people to remain 'employable' by constantly retraining (Gill 2002, 2007).

Int7 points out the difficulties of being a freelancer in that taking time out for training also means loss of income for that time given over to training.

“In the sense that I'm constantly trying to be updated? Yeah, being a freelancer, it's particularly hard because it's that whole notion that when you pay yourself when you're training you're losing a day. So it's almost as if the cost of the training is double what it is for your organisation, so for a freelancer it's really hard to keep up with it. So I tend to do it outside of work time, reading up on it and seeing what's out there on the Internet, as well. I find it quite difficult, particularly as a freelancer to do it.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

80% of WEVH women and 90% of non-WEVH women said that they didn't have the same training as their male counterparts which is rather like a double whammy as they also don't have the time to 'tinker' around McNeil (1987) and often have domestic responsibilities Massey (1995)

Int20 points out that even although she might have the same training as her male colleagues, the opportunities can be quite different in that the work that the men focused on got more attention as it showed off what the technology could do rather than being conceptual. This division of labour is a failure of our equal opportunities strategies, which fail to address the male/female dichotomy that exists in the wider society. As long as some jobs are seen to be male then it is hardly surprising that some women will not want to develop the skills and behaviours required to succeed in them (Wajcman 1991).

“Yes, I would say I had the same support but I don believe there is a slightly different parallel universe where the opportunities are different but the support that I get is the same, it's just that sometimes the opportunities are different, I don't know if that makes sense? Probably from the mid-nineties to early 2002/2003, my experience is that nothing interactive-based or new technology-based, new hardware with software, possible invitations would go out to male colleagues first or be invited to because they were pushing electronic making development. Some of my female colleagues and myself were more focused on the content we were developing with the technologies available to us and it just produced a different strand of support and interest in the work, where we would be very much theorising in Australia with some of the Grrr Girls and Feminist Fetishism, very much about the machine and the body was a very big discourse, on that and performance, that was very well supported. But on the other side you had more the programming. We can make changes and here's another interactive, and you can touch here and it does this and the wow factor, it was more the entertainment, the immediate factor. That just in some sense, I think in hindsight again, may produce a better headline or more technology focused interest than writing more conceptually about how technology impacts or how you communicate let's say, my work was very much about communication, about language, that was more part of a more traditional art discourse, about conceptualising as opposed to pushing the technology side of your work, that you're using the latest. And that women did do but it wasn't the focus, it was more a part.”
(41-year-old non-WEVH woman)

6.4. Chapter Summary

The results relating to the first theme of the thesis looking at women's experiences of training and the impact this has had on their lives are presented in this chapter. This first theme looked at how women became interested in new media and whether their career trajectory had been supported or hindered. Both groups of women were inspired by new technology, didn't want to be left behind and for those that were self employed or musicians needed to build their website to promote their work. The main difference here was that non-WEVH women became involved through the Internet and music, didn't want to be left behind and were largely self-taught. The WEVH women mentioned feminism and having had bad experiences on mixed gender courses and that their courses had led them into more alternative ways of working. When looking at how women

thought their course had prepared them in any way other than technical for the work environment WEVH women thought that it had and in a variety of different ways in comparison to the non-WEVH women. A greater percentage of WEVH women thought their course had prepared them in gaining transferable skills; confidence building; and in making alternative career decisions. Due to workload both groups of women were training themselves in their own time even when this was allocated by their workplace. When looking at on-going training a slightly higher percentage of non-WEVH women paid for their training due to being self-employed and taught themselves than WEVH women. More WEVH women in theory had training paid for through work and in work time.

Chapter 7

7. Survey Results: Lived Experiences of the Workplace

7.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the results relating to the second theme of this research; women's lived experiences of the workplace. It examines women's lived experiences of the workplace in terms of the structure and power dynamics, internal networks and work/life balance. The theme was addressed using the following five questions 'How is your workplace structured?', 'Are women's jobs perceived as being technical?', 'Do you work from home/office/studio?', 'What is your workload like and how do you manage it?' and 'How did you find out about your current job(s)?'

One of the most important points to note is that women often moved between different work statuses and could quite often be self-employed but involved with projects whereby they were working or collaborating with /for someone else. Most women had experience of being self-employed, freelancing and working for an employer.

The main differences that were highlighted from the first question that explores the structure and power dynamics of the workplace were that 30% more WEVH women's workplaces were managed by women whereas 20% more non-WEVH women worked in non-hierarchical organisations. Both sets of women complained about the lack of management/management style of the non-hierarchical organisations (Liff and Ward 2001; Gill 2002, 2007). The lack of formal channels and skilled managers combined with a 'post-feminist' attitude in the workplace resulted in women's issues often being ignored or the individual women were seen as

having lack of commitment rather than it being seen as an issue for all women (Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005a; Gill 2007).

Both groups of women also talked about other hierarchical structures with female middle managers. Although formal channels existed in these organisations the women interviewed said that they seldom took any issues to their female managers as they were merely carrying out the orders of their line managers who were usually male (Liff and Ward 2001; Simpson 1998). One non-WEVH woman also raised the issue of her next job being dependent on the reference of her current employers whose style of management involved shouting at people over an open plan studio in their trendy 'we're all on the same level' type new media office. This style of management that involved giving people a dressing down in public seemed to be quite normal in non-hierarchical private businesses. Both WEVH and non-WEVH women raised these issues in relation to there being a lack of formal channels for complaint and lack of management skills for the owners of the non-hierarchical businesses who were in effect their bosses (Gill 2002, 2007; Banks and Milestone 2011).

A high percentage of both groups, 60% WEVH and 70% non-WEVH thought that women's jobs were seen to be technical. However 40% of WEVH women voiced concerns over women's job not being seen as technical even when the actual job they were carrying out was normally seen as being so (Cockburn 1985; Henwood 1993). 20% of non-WEVH women thought that women's jobs were seen as being more technical than men's jobs but this was more to do with the set up in their workplace in that the man was in the position of having a technical job title but it was 'known' in the office that a particular woman had more knowledge/skills than the designated male with the technical job title (Clegg and Trayburn 1999).

Both groups of women had similar set ups in terms of how and where they worked although WEVH women stated that their awareness of women's issues had influenced their decision to work in a more supportive/alternative set up (Walker 2004).

Both groups of women mentioned the lack of support for part-time workers and talked about this in relation to their own reluctance to go from full-time to part-time work when being employed by someone else. Both groups of women found the lack of trust from their employers difficult when it came to being given the option of flexible working (Gatrell and Cooper 2008). For those that could work in this way it was seen as a way to deal with childcare issues that would otherwise be problematic. One WEVH woman raised the issue of flexible workers being treated less seriously than office based workers and found that they couldn't even get desk space when they did go into the office therefore the option was more about management saving money than about the workers having freedom of choice (Gill 2002).

All of the women interviewed had project based work with 90% of each group saying they were overworked; the remaining 20% didn't have enough work (Gill 2002). Again the main differences that were raised here were that WEVH women especially those with dependents had chosen to work for themselves rather than enter an office set up where there was an expectation to stay until the job was finished due to the culture of the office which on the whole ignored the needs of their female employees (Wharton 2005; Morrison and Milliken 2003; Piderit and Ashworth 2003).

A high proportion of both groups of women, 70% WEVH and 60% non-WEVH set up their own companies and obtained work through word of mouth although this can be problematic for those not in 'the loop' (Gill 2007). WEVH women, especially

those with children did this to ensure that they could combine their family life with their work-life. A number of non-WEVH women also mentioned that they chose this option because they didn't want to have to try and fit in with office culture in general and for some in particular the lad culture which is still very much present (Wharton 2005; Gill 2007; Banks and Milestone 2011). WEVH women were more likely to see this word of mouth way of working as being problematic in terms of wider political issues whereas more non-WEVH women thought it was a positive way of working and failed to see the downside of people employing from within their own network (Gill 2007). One non-WEVH woman did mention the lack of transparency in obtaining work through word of mouth and also the difficulties that faced women in a culture where there was an expectation to hang out in clubs/pubs which felt unsafe for some women and wasn't possible for those who had children (Richards and Milestone 2000; Gill 2007; Bradley et al 2007).

The second set of questions were posed to explore women's lived experiences of the workplace and to find out more about the structure and power dynamics of the workplace and how this affected both their sense of inclusion/exclusion and work/life balance. The first question about how is your workplace structured looks at management styles of the workplace and who in terms of gender is managing who. Question number two looks at whether women's jobs are perceived as being technical and explores the notion that some occupations are seen as technical because of who is doing those jobs as opposed to the skill set required for the job. The third question asks women why they choose to work in the office/studio/at home if indeed this is a choice and examines the reasons for this and how one's place of work can affect feelings of inclusion/exclusion in the workplace. The next question looks at the way women are working and how this is being managed in relation to workload,

project driven work, 9 to 5 routine work and how these factors affect women's choices and sense of satisfaction. Finally, how women find their work is examined, as are the pros and cons of this and their ability to secure and negotiate future work.

An open approach to data gathering was taken because a central principle of the research design was to examine women's lived experiences of the workplace. To achieve this it was important that all of their individual experiences were talked about rather than limiting their responses. Limiting women's responses would have given a distorted view of what they consider to be important experiences from their point of view. Whilst this approach meant that a large amount of data was captured it also meant that it was done in an unbiased way.

7.1. Structure and Power Dynamics of the Workplace

Women were asked 'how is your workplace structured?

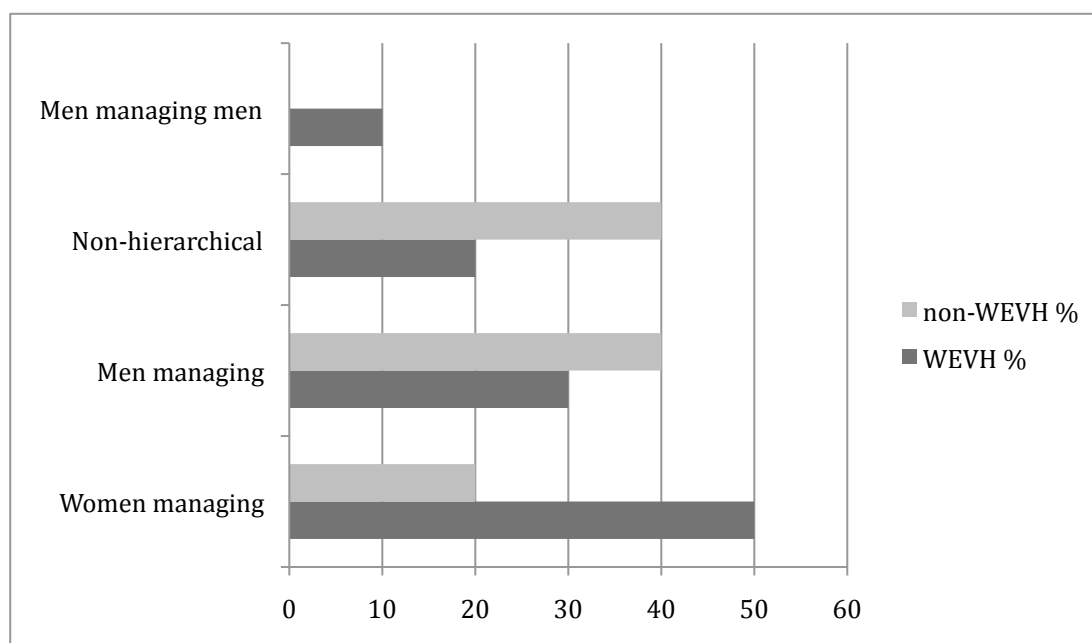
[Then] What type of work are women doing?

[Then] Are they managing and whom are they managing?

This question generated four responses from the women. The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women are summarised below in table 7.4 and show that the largest difference was with WEVH women choosing to be managed by other women. This is not so surprising as these women had been taught on a women-only course by female tutors in an environment supportive to the needs of women and one in which women were encouraged to ensure that their needs were met in their working lives (Walker 2005). It is encouraging to hear that

these women had found this crucial support as Banks and Milestone (2011) remind us that new media male managers are still caught up in ‘traditional’ ways of thinking.

Table 7.4 How is your workplace structured?



The largest difference here was in the workplaces of the WEVH women. 30% more had women managing them.

The women here talk about female managers and although there are a number of women in that role they are often at middle manager level with the most senior managers still being men (Kraft and Dubnoff 1983, cited in Henwood 1993).

Int7: "The last project, which was working for a local authority, was managed by a woman, who actually had been a friend of mine who got me the work. She was put into this role where she was really out of depth and she became this real dragon but I think that was partly because she works in a structure, which has a blame culture so she was so scared, it just cascaded down. So it was very threatening, constantly, if you don't do this, you'll get a disciplinary procedure, it was that disciplinary procedure was use as a stick rather than the disciplinary procedure comes out when you're not doing something. So she was a nightmare to work with, it was almost like that old stereotype, the women that I seem to work with in the local authority took on that stereo type, I've got to be harder and tougher than a man, to get anything done. It wasn't co-operative, people were terrified, people weren't happy, people

didn't enjoy their jobs, not many men in the department, a very female oriented department but it wasn't a fun place to work at all." (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int9: "Actually the whole project is managed by women." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int9 mentioned that women managed her whole company. Int9 set up the company funded through the local authority but run by her and her colleagues. She wrote the job descriptions and employed all the workers and interestingly they as a company have a very supportive attitude towards childcare/dependents. Int9 stated at different points in her interview that both men and the women in her company are technically minded and employed equally in this way. She did however also remark that male workers often stay at meetings whereas female employees need to return home to collect/look after their children and so miss out on some of the 'deals'/ networking opportunities that men take for granted. The old boys network is clearly still at large.

Int16: "Across all, there is four faculties and in my job all the managers are women, in our case the immediate line management would be male, the administrator in ICT it would be male, definitely but in the university a lot of the high managers who were women but we're in a faculty of humanities, so there's more likely to be women than in a lot of other faculties." (54-year-old WEVH woman)

Again, interestingly in a humanities department where all the managers are female the administrator is male and the next management level up is all male. This horizontal and vertical segregation within sectors is well documented (Kraft and Dubnoff 1983, cited in Henwood 1993) and there appears to be little change over the last thirty odd years.

20% more non-WEVH women worked in a non-hierarchical way. The women here talk about working in a non-hierarchical way in the workplace which for some works if

the organisation is actually set up to run in this way whereas in the case of Int3's workplace it becomes a style of management or lack of it that in effect doesn't work as no real thought has gone into it.

Int3 "Well, in some ways they don't really manage anybody, there isn't a very formal line management structure. The person who is my line manager is one of the guys, so they don't break it down in that way, really, they are pretty loose around there. I think they are typical of that sort of organisation, they don't really understand, they think they're pretty cool and they all came out of academia and they think they've left it behind and unfortunately I don't think they have!" (58-year-old WEVH woman)

Int5 "It's worked in an entirely democratic process at D****, there is nobody in charge of it, it's a non-hierarchical organisation, different people are responsible for different bits but that overlaps, as well. Quite a few people with technical expertise, people to run the website of course, because keeping the radio stream up and running is complicated. In order to work in a radio station you don't have to be able to handle every aspect of it, obviously. Some people don't have the confidence to record and produce their own shows but they do know how to handle other aspects. We upload our show from here, somebody else downloads it onto the server and uploads it into the stream and does all the technical things that I don't understand at the other end." (25-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int5 has quite a different experience from a lot of the other women working in the new media sector. She works at a radio station that plays alternative indie music. It is a grass roots organisation with an alternative philosophy that is based around the quality of the music as opposed to making money from it and this ethos has meant that the people who are involved with the organisation are very committed to doing and seeing things in a more community minded way where there is much emphasis on inclusiveness and they have progressive equal opportunities policies that would put some larger commercial companies to shame.

7.2. Gendered by Design

Women were asked 'are women's jobs perceived as being technical?'

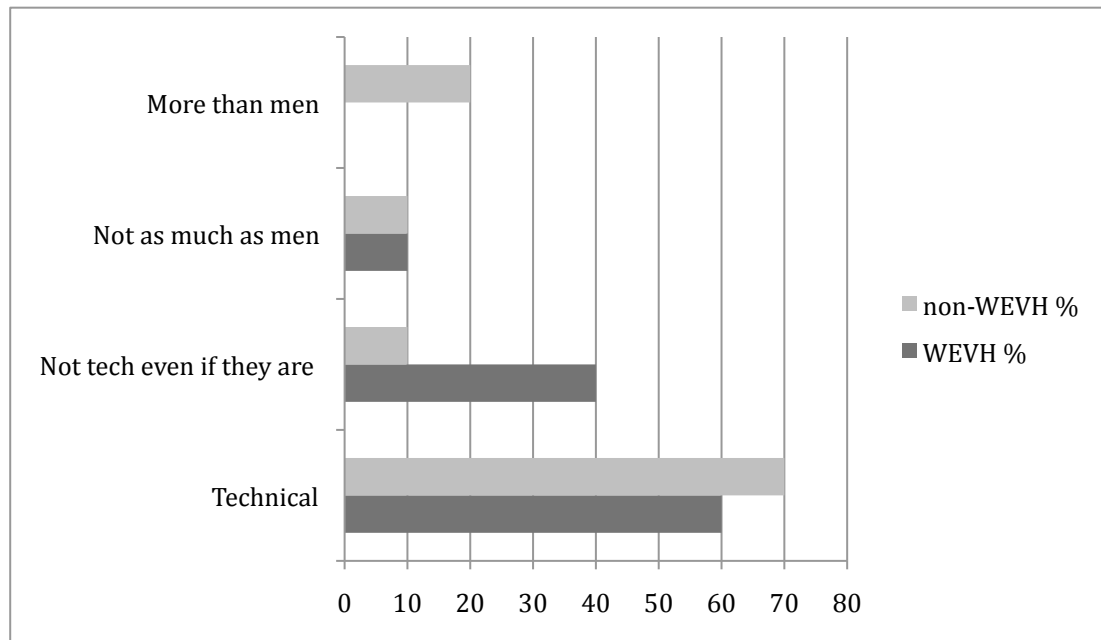
This question generated four responses from the women. The second column of table 7.5 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 7.5 Are women's jobs perceived as being technical?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Technical	60	70	65
Not tech even if they are	40	10	25
Not as much as men	10	10	10
More than men	0	20	10

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 7.5 are summarised below in table 7.5b and show 30% more WEVH women thought that women's jobs were not considered technical even if they were. It would seem that the WEVH women are more critical in their analysis and having been taught in a women-only environment geared towards ensuring that women's needs are met this has ensured that their critical thinking of a situation is more developed or that they feel more at ease to express their more radical thoughts (Henwood 1998).

Table 7.5b Are women's jobs perceived as being technical?



30% more WEVH women said that women's jobs are not considered technical even if they were. Game and Pringle (1984) adopt a social constructionist framework where their understanding of '*social processes... designed in the interests of particular social groups, and against the interests of others*' (1984: 17).

Int2 talks about setting up an installation where her female middle managers have hired two men to assist her but instead of recognizing her as the expert the men assume this role for themselves and leave her to sort out their mess. She believes in this case that female middle managers are responsible for perpetuating the myth of men being more competent in this area but also goes on to say that men were managing those women.

Int2 "The guy was set up as the expert, although it was my work and I was technically minded. So the use of the equipment, how I was formatting my DVD and so on, he kind of went, 'that's not right' which sent us off on a whole thing where actually he was the one that wasn't right. I said to him that the DVD would do this and he sent us off on a big round trip and when it was being installed he tried to make decisions about that because it was meant to be an immersive kind of installation and he was making decisions about how it should be shown. There was a number of different things there which were repeated, experiences of how the women who do have power in a way, were

themselves actually perpetuating this myth of the men being competent even though it's quite clearly your area of competence. It's kind of disturbing, really so there's still those old things of not being listened to and not being valued or respected and so on. But what I hadn't realised actually are that women are in those middle-management positions but if you go a little bit higher to the top of an organisation, they're the blokes. Quite often, the women, the curators, the main administrators that I was dealing with as an artist, they're women who carry on working in the same ways.” (53-year-old WEVH woman)

20% of non-WEVH women stated that women's jobs were seen as more technical than their male counterparts. Both Int10 and Int7 describe how in their organisations it's women who are seen to be more technical whether in fact it is their job to be so or not.

Int10: “Yes, and I've also found that when I've worked in other place I've always been the person who tends to get, 'the computers down, the printer's not working, the internets down, can you fix this?' So, for me, I think I'm probably seen as the person who is more technical than most of the people in the organisations that I work for!” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int10 was actually quite annoyed at the fact that she was the most technical person in her workplace as she was often, especially before she was trained at the WEVH was employed in a non-technical role and indeed should have been given the recognition in her job description for the work that she was already doing.

Int7: “The two people who worked on the technical side of the department, there was a bloke who was the manager and there was a woman, executive was her title and you always went to B*** if you wanted something doing. He was a 'computer says no' man, I think that was partly to do with how he was managed, and he couldn't do anything. I think that was partly to do with how he was managed; he wasn't given the freedom to actually be a manager and to make choice and decisions. So B*** was really good with the technology, she was younger, she was used to using technology all the time, used to being on the Internet, mobile phones, it was how she communicated, so she was actually better than her manager.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

This account of how women are often put into the role of technician even when they are not employed in that capacity is put down to the individual woman's youth rather than being seen as a political situation where the male member of the company is receiving all the benefits for a job position that is actually being carried out by a female member of staff who isn't actually employed in that capacity so will not receive any of the formal benefits that could help her secure better work/pay in the future.

60% of WEVH and 70% of non-WEVH women thought that women's jobs were perceived as technical. Both Int9, who runs a voluntary sector media project and In17, who works as a senior lecturer at a University thought that women's jobs were perceived as technical and in the case of In17's University all of the technicians were women.

Int9: "Still a lot of technical stuff does come from the men but then we've got people like Heather, who project manages who also can do all the technical stuff, as well. Also, some people have got both." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Interviewer: "That was my next question, are women's jobs perceived as being technical?"

Int9: "Yeah, some of the jobs are technical and some of the stuff that I do is technical, some of the stuff I do is technical, some of the stuff that heather does is technical, whereas...." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int9, a former WEVH student has actually ensured that her company runs as an equal opportunities employer should and has put a lot of time and effort into establishing good practices that enable both men and women to benefit from skills sharing and being able to take part in meetings by scheduling them at times when everyone can be present.

Int17: "Yeah, I noticed yesterday, I was walking down the floor and I saw these three ladies walking down and I thought to myself, this is a really nice picture because it was the head of technical management, the head of the

workshops and the head of the media workshop and they were all female. All three technicians were female.” (46-year-old non-WEVH woman)

I found this insight into Int17’s working environment very interesting and when she first told me that all three technicians were female I thought - progress! She did however go on to say that all of the higher-grade managers were men. This vertical hierarchy clearly needs addressing, as this is a public sector funded University. Rees (1998) discusses mainstreaming which ensures that equal opportunities policies and practices are adopted at all levels of our society including the structural so having these requirements written into the policies of the public sector institutions should ensure that this vertical segregation is addressed unless of course there are other factors at play. Cockburn (1985) shows how male workers in her study were actively engaged in excluding women from work that was defined as technological.

7.3. The Working Environment

Women were asked ‘do you work from home, office or studio?’

[Then] What is this decision based on and how does it affect your home/work life in terms of inclusion/exclusion in the workplace?’

This question generated six responses from the women. The second column of table 7.6 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

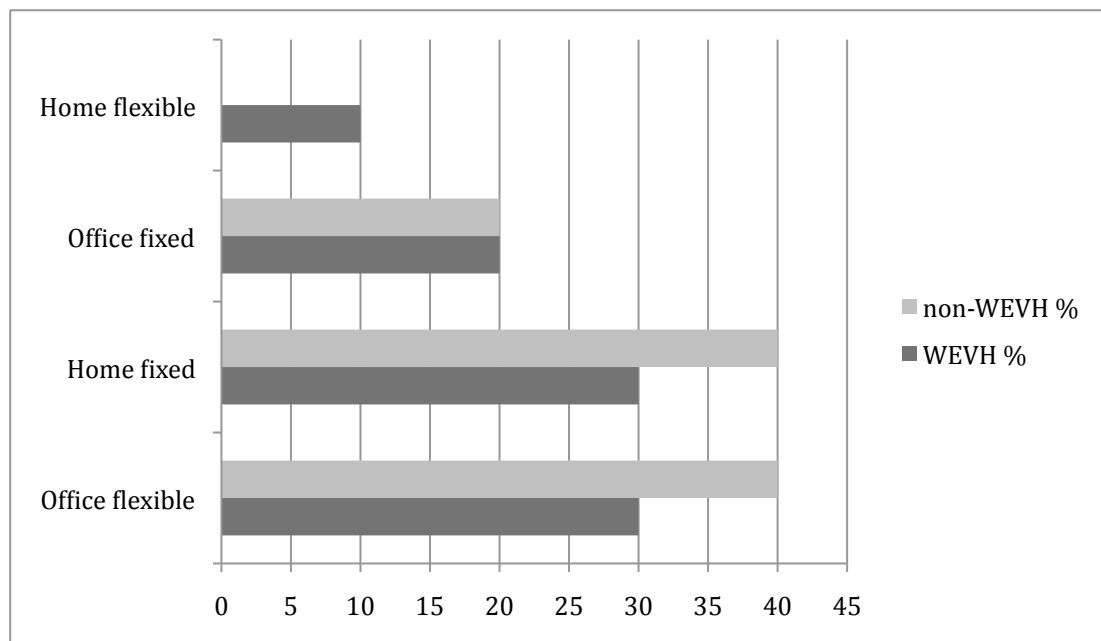
Table 7.6 Do you work from home, office or studio?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
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Office flexible	30	40	35
Home Fixed	30	40	35
Office fixed	20	20	20
Home Flexible	10	0	5
Portable studio	10	0	5

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 7.6 are summarised below in table 7.6b and show that there was very little difference between the two groups. The main difference was between women with children and those who didn't. Mothers with small children preferred to have a routine job where the hours allowed them to negotiate school duties and spend more time at the weekend with their children (Ellen and Herman 2005).

Table 7.6b Do you work from home, office or studio?



Both groups could work flexible hours from their office with 10% more non-WEVH being able to. Int3 says that although she is a flexible worker in practice she often doesn't have any space to work when she does go into the office, which means she spends more time at home, which isn't really what she wants. In a study carried out by Smeaten et al (2007) they found that 41% of employers implemented flexible

working opportunities in order to improve staff morale, recruitment and/or retention. Over one third stated that they had introduced flexible working arrangements for reasons of work-life balance, particularly to accommodate the family life of their employees; 20% stated that they had done so in order to improve the service they provided to clients and customers; and 8% had done so to improve productivity (Smeaten et al 2007: 9). However, these figures don't change the fact that we live in a culture of presenteeism Simpson (1998).

Int3: "I don't think it's great, I don't think it's great, even though I have to say, I'm kind of choosing it, I don't have to but then on the other hand, it's not that easy to go and hot desk, you can go in sometimes and there isn't a desk and setting the things up can be a bit awkward. So, I kind of feel a bit schizophrenic." (58-year-old WEVH woman)

This supposedly liberatory potential for women, through the enablement of 'new' forms of working such as 'telework' for example is clearly not working in Int3's favour and could in fact be affecting more than just her work as she is being forced to work from home (Golding 2000; Wilson and Greenhill 2004).

Int17 sees flexible office working as a way to curb her tendency to over-work. She also points out other benefits such as feeling less isolated and for it to be easier to meet up with others for meetings.

Int17: "Not having my work based in home, all the time to try and stop me from doing stupid hours. The co-operation and not the isolation that you can have if you're a freelancer working from home and being in the city centre, as well it's a lot easier to have meetings, to see people, to network than being based out here at home." (46-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int17's experience is clearly quite different in that she has contact with other new media workers, which is important not only to combat isolation but it is also a vital source of information about new and changing technologies, problem solving, and future work opportunities (Pratt 2000).

Women who worked from home in the main had no choice. 10% more non-WEVH women worked in this way. For Int6 her work is based at her home so she feels like she has the best of both worlds in that she can choose to have meetings at clients' workplaces if she feels the need to have some company and also benefits from flexible hours.

Int6: "Home, it's like my studio at home."

Interviewer: "And what is that decision based on?"

Int6: "Liking to be at home and liking to be on my own, working, not always liking to be in a team. I quite like working on my own, I can do it, although it's nice to go into the company sometimes, you know and all have a cup of tea and a chat. But also I don't like having a boss, it's a bit like we said before I don't really want someone saying you can't have next Wednesday off, cause we're busy. So this way, I've got the best of both worlds and when I go in, freelancing, they treat me quite well' cause they need you, cause they're busy and you're not really involved in the politics and they need to be nice to you because they're desperate."

Interviewer: "Does that make you feel included?"

Int6: "Well, partly included and partly not included because I don't have to go to any meetings and I don't have to join in any negotiation about anything, I literally go in and they say 'can you do me that?' and I say, ' yeah, I can do that, what's next?' 'Can you do that now, or do that', no politics or anything. It suits me, yeah." (49-year-old WEVH woman)

Int6's remarks are interesting in that here she is being positive about being able to work from home and not liking to have a boss or be part of a team and she also likes the freedom but at the same time she earns below £15000 a year despite being a highly skilled woman. 'This is the trade off for her freedom and not wanting to 'commit' fully to a 9 to 5 lifestyle. She is penalised financially and also doesn't receive training, holidays or a pension.

Int10 has a studio at home, which is mainly for financial reasons and finds it difficult to cut off from work and also feels isolated.

Int10: "I work from home but we have a separate studio because I work with me partner and he does more general IT, so we have an office in the loft that we converted. Mainly because, for us, it's easier because we don't have to go out to work and I think that' one of our strengths with it being such a small company if something goes wrong we can be on it, straight away and cost, as well, there's no need for us to go out and rent office space if we can work from home. It obviously does no matter how much you try and stop it from interfering with home life, because it is there and so it is too easy to get up on a Sunday morning and think it's raining, I won't go out for that walk, I'll go and do some work."

Interviewer: "You mentioned earlier that there was an element of you feeling as if you weren't getting out enough, not seeing people, does that effect your feeling of being included or your sense of isolation?"

Int10: "Yes, but I think that's down to me, I am, and how I'm dealing with stuff, I've definitely lost that work/life balance and I'm desperately trying to get it back!" (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int10's situation is very common and although she does have a studio it is still based at home due to financial reasons. Women more so than men work from home for this reason and as a result can often feel isolated and lose their networking skills and confidence. Int10 does mention overworking too and elsewhere she has stated that she has found the thought of having to go to a meeting or talk on the telephone difficult so although she says it is 'easier' for her and her partner there are drawbacks (Gill 2002, 2007; Lewis and Cooper 2005; Moore et al 2005).

Int11 works from home from her studio because she prefers not to engage in office culture, as she feels stifled by it.

Int11: "Well, I wouldn't say it was a choice. I've never been able to do a nine to five job so I wouldn't be comfortable going into a big company and working."

Interviewer: "That interesting, why?"

Int11: "I just don't like the environment?"

Interviewer: "Just don't like it, what don't you like?"

Int11: "... just the way people get so absorbed in it, just feel stifled by it, the dynamics and the gossiping..."

Interviewer: "The culture?"

Int11: "Just the whole culture, yeah." (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int11's feeling of being stifled and not liking anything about the office culture is no revelation for a lot of lesbian women (Stepulevage 1997; Henwood 1993; Stepulevage and Plumeridge 1998 and Wharton 2005).

Int12's need for freedom to do her own thing when and how she likes is her major reason for working from home as well as her home providing a large space to work from. Her strong sense of independence means that she chooses to work from home too. Int12 also happens to be a lesbian and again there appears to be a connection between sexuality and a feeling of not being comfortable in an office environment due to the hetero-normative culture and lack of diversity.

Int12: "All of those, so a studio in my home, studio/office and it's based on the fact that we've got this building that suits my business very well because there's lots of making place, testing out places and loads of storage space, so it's largely based on not wanting to be employed by anyone else and being free to do what I want, when I want to do it."

Interviewer: "Why wouldn't you want to be employed by anyone else?"

Int12: "Because I'd find it really frustrating, it depends on what it was, who and what. I just want control of my own work, finances, whatever and I don't want to have to answer to anyone else for it and I know if it's not going well, I've got to sort it out, I don't want to depend on anyone else to sort it out for me." (39-year-old WEVH woman)

Int14 works from home due to financial reasons but visits a local media centre to take advantage of their hot desking facilities and to meet up with like-minded creative types.

Int14: "Home and it's because I can't afford a studio."

Interviewer: "How does it affect your feelings of being included or excluded?"

Int14: "Well, I think you have to be part of networks and you have to actively go out and be involved with things, which is why I'm really pleased that I've got involved with Madlab and through Madlab there was some other type of desk-hopping type thing that people were trying to set up, because I think other people feel the same thing and I don't think that's a gender thing, I think people just end up stuck at home. So Madlab has become very popular, there's something on every night, there's like a Geek Girl afternoon tea, which I've never made because it's a Sunday." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int14 is another example of a woman having to work from home because of finances. Int14 is an Asian lesbian. She states elsewhere that she often finds it difficult to work out why she hasn't been able to secure funding for particular projects due to lack of feedback and is often left wondering if it is because she is Asian, a lesbian or that her politics are left of centre. This lack of transparency in an emerging sector that thinks it is too 'cool and egalitarian' and therefore above having to monitoring its employment policies and practices is a clear set back leaving those discriminated against with no formal means of challenging this let alone proving it.

One WEVH woman has a portable office. The drawbacks of this are that she didn't feel as if she could cut off from work and struggled to find her work/life balance.

Int2: "What I find for people in my situation is that they very rarely switch off: I'm awake so therefore I can be working, I'm asleep so therefore I can be working. I wake up, I will write about some work. The boundaries aren't there that are in a nine to five, five days a week kind of thing. I think I've always had a problem with that, even when I've been working in the voluntary sector, I think I'm probably a bit of that way inclined anyway so I try and find things that I'm passionate about really and that I'm interested in, that I enjoy doing. Quite often the people that I want to spend time with have conversations with, if I'm not sitting on my own with a laptop, which I am, quite often. So, work is a constant kind of issue, the work/life balance because it's quite difficult to say, that's it for today but I like the flexibility, as well." (53-year-old WEVH woman)

Int2 describes herself as a celibate feminist and although she says here that she enjoys the flexibility of her work she also doesn't actually earn enough money and has to rely on state benefits despite being a very skilled woman. She talks about the importance of 'playing' the game in that if you are seen as being 'troublesome' you will not be successful and she does see herself as a successful artist despite not earning a decent living wage. It is interesting that she mentioned other male artists being brought in on her projects, which clearly takes money away from a budget that could be allocated to her as the expert in this field.

The figures for fixed office space were the same for both groups of women. This set up brought out more of an angry response from those who felt forced into doing it, as they saw no reason as to why flexible working couldn't be put in place. Int13 felt very psychologically oppressed by it and mentioned the small office culture dominated by men that other women gave this as a reason for not working in an office.

Int13: "A studio because that is what they want."

Interviewer: "Ok, how does this affect your home or your work life, would you say?"

Int13: "I don't like it, I mean I'm not a parent; I don't have childcare or care responsibilities of any kind. However, I don't like the psychological oppression that comes with being part of a certain office culture. It's something that I've observed a lot, over the years, that I've been part of a lot over the years. I don't want to work in, full-time on my own, as a freelancer, it's something I feel strongly about on this because there's still very few in between options, ideal would be working with like-minded people but not just my company, some other people, mixing with others, having some role models, some other women because it is quite isolating in a small company. You get to make your mark because you're the only one or one of a few women so you get recognition, so you get that, you get to prove something to your self but you miss out on all that other company, inspiration, ideas, attitudes. I don't like being in an environment that I feel is quite small minded and I do feel that, especially for different reasons in an all male environment. So I'm not a fan, it feels like a hazard of the job, really. With my current employers, I've been trying to get them to take on flexible working, which they have: well they haven't really. I've got them to implement a semi-unofficial flexi-time scheme, which I use and no one else does!" (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int13 brings up the point that her male co-workers do not take advantage of their flexi-time whereas she does. It would be interesting to know why this is so and whether these men have children or dependents. The working environment clearly agrees with them otherwise they would take time out or perhaps they think that they might be missing out on opportunities if they are not in the office with all the other men, that in some way they would be seen as not being competitive or reliable enough - a player in other words.

Both groups of women mentioned this. For Int20 it was a case of stop start working with either having no work or work that involves too many long hours. The bulimic culture of the new media industry is well documented (Wharton 2005; Morrison and Milliken 2003; Piderit and Ashworth 2003). While new fathers are also entitled to apply for a modified working schedule, few do so in practice. This possibly reflects organisational cultures, which penalise those who reduce their hours, or reject the long hours culture, by interpreting attempts to balance work and life as displays of reduced organisational commitment. The social costs of long hours can, however, be significant with the risk of family tension and breakdown (Cowling 2005).

Int20: "Both studios and here. That decision is based on my physical health, really. If I could be in a studio full time then I would! M: How does that affect your feeling of inclusion or exclusion? Thank goodness for the Internet, it's a lifeline, especially album-wise; I'm doing all my marketing in my slippers, really! I don't actually have to go anywhere and that's the great thing about nowadays, I'm very, very thankful that is it because when I was laid up before my career would have to completely come to a standstill and obviously I have influenced that to an extent because I can't do the eight hour studio sessions anymore, well not at the moment, anyway and things like that. There is just that thing of needing to do the long hours and I can't do that, so it definitely does have an effect and I'm not earning as much, well not earning anything at the moment, in that sense."

Interviewer: "You mentioned long hours, do you think that there is still a long hours culture, at the moment?"

Int20: "Yeah, definitely. I mean, I've been lucky to get a jobs which have just been a few hours but when comes to doing albums or community projects it is long hours, definitely." (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int20 is a single woman with no children or dependents although her disability means that the long hours culture prevents her from using her other skill set - sound engineering as this involves having to work with other people and to their timetables. The other side of her skill set, her music has taken off with her album being released last year.

7.4. Work Patterns

Women were asked ‘what is your workload like and how do you manage it?’

[Then] Is it project based? What has influenced your decision to be in your job?’

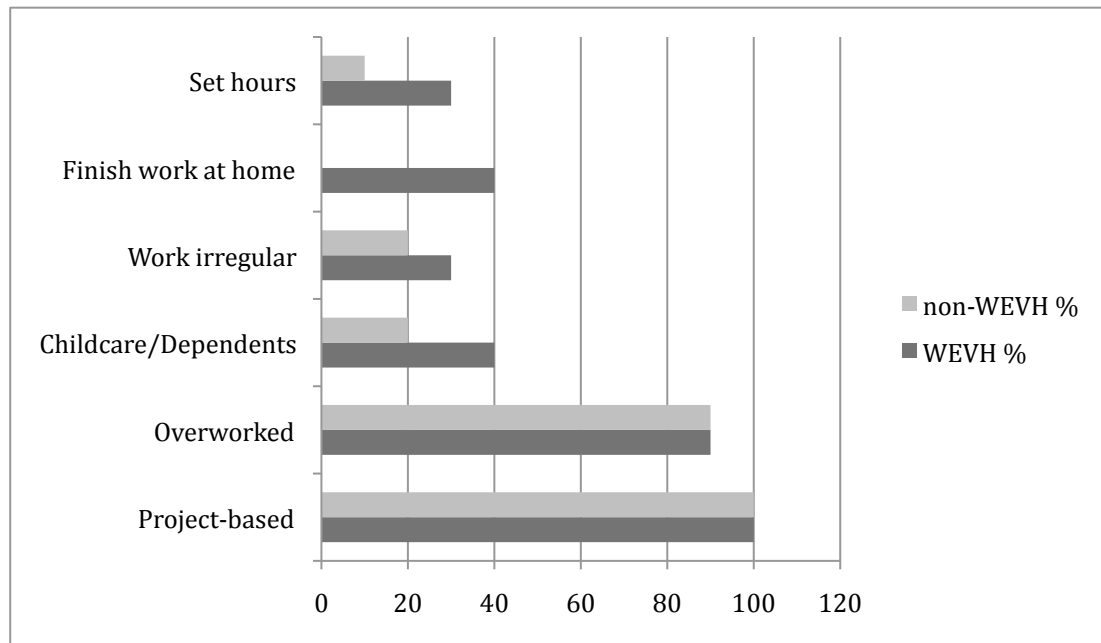
This question generated six responses from the women. The second column of table 7.7 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 7.7 What is your workload like and how do you manage it?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Project based	100	100	100
Overworked	90	90	90
Child care/ Dependents	40	20	30
Irregular work	30	20	25
Finish off at home	40	0	20
Set hours	30	10	20

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 7.7 are summarised below in table 7.7b and again show that women with children are choosing to work in the voluntary, public and education sectors so they can combine family life with their careers (Walker 2005; Webster 2007; Ellen and Herman 2005).

Table 7.7b What is your workload like and how do you manage it?



The main differences here were that 40% WEVH women that worked in an office had to finish their work at home with none of the non-WEVH women having to do this. This difference is often due to women having children choosing to work in the public or voluntary sectors due to childcare responsibilities (Ellen and Herman 2005).

For Int1 working at the University for her means that she often has to work in her own time even although she says it is because she feels motivated to do so. She can't fit her workload into the time allocated at work.

Int1: "It's not possible for them to make the work in the circumstances in which we're expected to operate during the day. So I tend to do that work at home, at night. So I work pretty much day and then evening, through to quite early hours, if I have to for certain projects. I think a lot of it is that I don't really consider it work because I enjoy it, like the stuff I do at night. It doesn't feel, it's not an external pressure to do the work, it's because I'm motivated to do it." (47-year-old WEVH woman)

For Int1 re-training and completing her MSc was to enable her to escape from the music/fashion industry that required her to frequent clubs and pubs which she knew

wouldn't fit with her wanting to have a family therefore this arrangement although not differing that much on the late hours means that at least she can be at home with her children tucked up in bed. Since this interview Int1's husband has died leaving her with two children to look after. Her job at the University means that she will be able to continue to be able to support her and her family financially whereas if she had been self employed in the music industry there would have been no such benefits (Richards and Milestone 2000).

Int12 is self-employed and has to work when the work comes in which is often sporadic and with a tight deadline with all the other needs of the business to contend with too and family life. This often leads to a feeling of being disorganised through responding to work rather than planning for it.

Int12: "It can be quite sporadic, it's project-based, definitely so we get commissioned to make things or we get big events that we have to make things for. So, we can get really, really busy and we can get quiet periods. Quite often we're just busy doing the work without much time to plan, as a business, which is problematic."

Interviewer: "Why is that problematic?"

Int12: "Because it means that we've not got a focus and a direction for the business. We're just getting hand to mouth I suppose, quite a lot of the time. Getting the work in, if we've not got the work, we're trying to get the work and then when we've got the work, we're doing the work, we're not doing the planning for the business. We know what we need to do but it's actually finding the space to do it and fitting that in with family and everything else."

Interviewer: "Would you say that you're satisfied with your work or how could it be improved on?"

Int12: "Sometimes. Quite often I'm quite proud of what we do but... it could be improved on in loads of ways! It could be loads more organized, probably by planning, business planning. By having the time to do that and not be stressed about chasing work." (39-year-old WEVH woman)

Int12 cites one of the biggest problems with bringing actual work home with you is that it means that you then don't have the headspace to do any planning as well as having no leisure time. This treadmill type of existence is very stressful especially when you are self-employed and responsible for your own income on a day-to-day basis. Although Int12 has said previously that she wants to be her own boss and be in

control this often means that one is quite out of control in that there is a need to take on work in quite a haphazard way because of the financial implications. Int12 has two young children.

20% more WEVH women had set office hours.

Int15 explains that set office hours doesn't in fact mean set office work.

Int15: "No, but if I haven't done it then I have to bring it home." (38-year-old WEVH woman)

Set office hours are clearly some kind of mythical state these days in that they don't seem to exist (Simpson 1998). 20% more WEVH women had childcare/dependent responsibilities. PricewaterhouseCoopers (2003) found that the increase in the productivity and output of the economy as a consequence of providing publicly subsidized childcare could meet the costs of this provision. Int9, a director of a media company shows that she puts a lot of thought into the needs of those with childcare/dependents.

Int9: "I think because we're a kind of all woman organisation, there's a kind of understanding around childcare, we kind of work it out and also children can come in here, as well. So, between us we kind of work out if people who need to be at home because they've got childcare issues can work at home because you can get much more done, really when you can work at home, on your own, even if you've got children around. I've lost the plot there, a bit!"

Interviewer: "How do you manage your home life with your work responsibilities, if you've got a project with a deadline?"

Int9: "Well, I think a lot of the time I'm here full-time...well, you do work at home, as well, so I think that you have to work all day and then you have to go home and do other things to make it work, really. So, that's just part of it, that's part of your work life and I think that's because there's a passion there, to be able to put really high quality projects out there, I suppose you put yourself under some pressure, really to achieve the stuff. You have to go the extra mile, a lot of the time and that takes time and energy and so you just end up working 14-hour days just to get things done. Then we're in the kind of business where there is a lot of competition out there to be able to get funding, to be able to push projects forward, so it's always driving...you know that kind of drive." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int9's workplace set-up is very unusual and is informed by both her experiences at the WEVH and her feminism. Her project is obviously difficult to manage and it does have a long hours culture but she acknowledges this and provides the support necessary for women who want to work in this way given the nature of the industry.

All of the women had project-based work. Project based work has become the accepted way of working in the new media industry and at its best ensures that the work is varied and interesting. At worst it entails working all hours until the project is finished and that people's contracts are dependent on new projects being secured. This way of working is highly stressful and extremely unreliable (Moore et al 2005; Gill 2007).

Int2 believes that project based work merely means more work and less pay for your labours.

Int2: "You've got to keep it moving all of the time. It is project-based work, I am very passionate about my work, very driven, I am happy with it. I don't think it is a static thing, you have to keep changing your position on it all the time and some of that is to do with the economy, at the moment. Undoubtedly it's making life difficult for artists or creative practitioners. The projects don't really work out financially. I have to subsidise them and I'm trying to find ways of making a smaller, more regular income. I'm trying to find ways of getting some research funding at the moment because the problem is, with the amount of work you do for a project, you think you're getting this fantastic salary but for the amount of hours you do for it, it actually works out at about 55p an hour for it!" (53-year-old WEVH woman)

Int2's feminist political perspective on her working life enables her to dissect, analyse it and see exactly where the problems lie and contextualise it rather than see it as being her fault (Henwood 1996: 8).

Int3's answer to project work is to multitask although when she had her three children this was very hard as there was still an expectation for her to maintain the household as well as work even although her husband thought he was a right on guy.

Int3: “What I've learned to do is, I just ignore it, I do admit to loading the dishwasher while the computer is booting up or bundling a few things in the washing machine but I have got very good at just closing the door on the kitchen and just leaving it, so I have got quite adept at that, now. I never used to be, especially because I've got three kids, they've all gone now but I used to find it much harder and the subconscious expectation is that you would do it, whether I was at work or not, even when I was working at the university there was a kind of subtext, you know. Even though my husband feels as though he's a really right-on guy, when it came down to putting his money where his mouth was it was a different matter.” (58-year-old WEVH woman)

Int3's remarks on her husband are very telling and so very true for a lot of women.

Having children and being a feminist doesn't go hand in hand with receiving the support that one should with the childcare and so many women are left literally holding the baby. Int3 has been made redundant since this interview and at her age will probably not work again as her husband is now ill and needs looking after.

These accounts are all too frequent for so many women (Von Hellens et al 2004).

Int8 is single, dependent free, finds project work manageable and feels passionate about what each new project brings. She is quite apolitical and believes that we can all set out to achieve what we want to and sees everything in a very positive non-critical way. At the time of the interview her mother had recently passed away and I think that this had resulted in her being very philosophical about life.

Int8: “It's normally very manageable, I'm quite structured in terms of how I lay out my days and I normally know what I want to do every day and what I want to achieve. I don't normally get that stressed about things, I normally tend to take a step back and think ok, let's just deal with this one step at a time in order to reach that goal. So, my workload is and was even when I was at the university was manageable. Project driven definitely, if it's the routine then I tend to lose my passion for something whereas if it's project-based and there's new things coming up all the time it allows me to think about things differently and be more innovative and push the boundaries and do things differently. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't but that is the beauty of it.” (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

For Int16, who works for a University, this system is just another unnecessary introduction to the workplace that isn't at all required in order for the work to get done and done well.

Int16: "It's a bit like with business or this project-management approach, do you really think that no work ever got done before these systems were invented? What, nobody ever learnt anything before learning outcomes came out, well obviously they did but you work in the environment that you work in and it's a bit sad that you just give in and go along with it, if you're expecting people to pay you then that's what you're being paid for largely." (54-year-old WEVH woman)

Int16's comment is in response to the new working methods being brought into Universities that have already been adopted by the Voluntary and Further Education sectors. 90% of each group stated that they were overworked. The majority of the women felt completely overworked and the habit difficult to break if indeed it is a habit or within their control. For Int20 this cycle began at college where they were given 24hr access to the media labs and she has never broken the cycle.

Int20: "Practice, with deadline. And how do I manage it? Exactly as chaotic as I managed my own art projects and it's a nightmare because I never learnt from earlier on a more structured methodology that separates work as practice and time for you. So, I continued my 24/7 as part of my workload and it's hard to break, it's very hard to break." (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int7 has begun to take on smaller more manageable projects to combat overworking on larger unmanageable ones. She chooses who to work with and cites bullying as behaviour that she tries to stay clear of in her work environment which in the past has made her see the workplace as an unpleasant place to be.

Int7: "It's been project based, I've been quite lucky as a freelancer, I've never applied pretty much for anything pretty much for the last 8 years, and it's tended to be big long-term projects. So I had Pride as a freelancer for 3 years and then Blackpool, and it's been completely unmanageable, completely stressful, totally over the top, partly of my own making and not. I would say it's a real love hate relationship, I love the challenge and the excitement but I resented it so much. Now, I'm trying to do smaller projects that are more manageable, that I do sensible 8-hour working days, don't work full-time and

that I actually work with people I like. This trying to get away from the notion that work has to be an unpleasant place to be. Actually, why do I work with people who are bullies and who aren't fun and so actually that is part of the decision with the office, I work with Sarah and Ian who are friends, they're not just people that I work with so that's a big part of it as well." (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int10 believes that it is more often the client who makes the project deadline more difficult to meet with their constant changes or lack of understanding of what they really want. This is all too common with multimedia work which is why it is even more difficult when women lose their confidence and avoid meetings as this just exacerbates problems in this area which can in turn drag out a project making it less financially viable.

Int10: "Generally it will start project based but usually it will become on going and I'll have quite regular contact with clients."

Interviewer: "Is that very dependent on time and how do you cope with that? Is there a real time-factor to it?"

Int10: "Not necessarily, usually people want things up and running within a month and that very rarely happens and that's usually down to them rather than me because they don't get their act together! They generally start out with I time frame in mind that I can work to but it's usually down to clients not actually being able to produce the information or agree on what they actually want." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

30% of WEVH women talked about this and 20% of non-WEVH women in this question.

For Int21 her music career and sound engineering combined with health issues mean that work is irregular although it's not something she would like to change in as much as she can. This is very much in keeping with Gill's finding of 2002 and 2007. In both her studies she found that a major problem for self-employed people was the 'bulimic' nature of the work.

Int20: "Yeah, obviously, at the moment things are different, it's very self-regulated, it's project based, in that when a project pops up you focus your energies around that project and you try to fit in the other stuff around it, like gigs and my own stuff, like for the moment I'm doing a track for a Mexican

compilation, so there are these extra little things that come up so you fit them in but apart from that it's all quite self regulated in terms of building your own routine which works for me, health-wise because it means that I can go and lie down for an hour in the afternoon and then get up. Which is good, obviously but it means that I'm not moving or shaking as much as I'd like to."

Interviewer: "I understand. Would you say that you're happy with your work?"

Int20: "I'm not happy in the sense that I instinctively think that I should be and can be in the studio and doing a lot more studio engineering and I want to be both as a woman, because there are so few of us and visibility is a huge thing because it's a behind doors industry, anyway. But the more that you do it and if you are good as a women your name will get about and that was starting to happen and as a freelance, working with community and schools. I'm not so bothered about the community and schools bit but I think studio wise, I do." (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

It's clear that for Int20 there are some benefits to being in an industry that has quite irregular work patterns but she doesn't earn any money, has no job security or sickness benefits. This desire to be autonomous and forego 'traditional' working benefits appears to be quite common with this group of interviewees (Christopherson et al 1999).

7.5. Finding, Securing and Negotiating Work

Women were asked ' how did you find out about your current job(s)?

[Then] What are the pros and cons of word of mouth?'

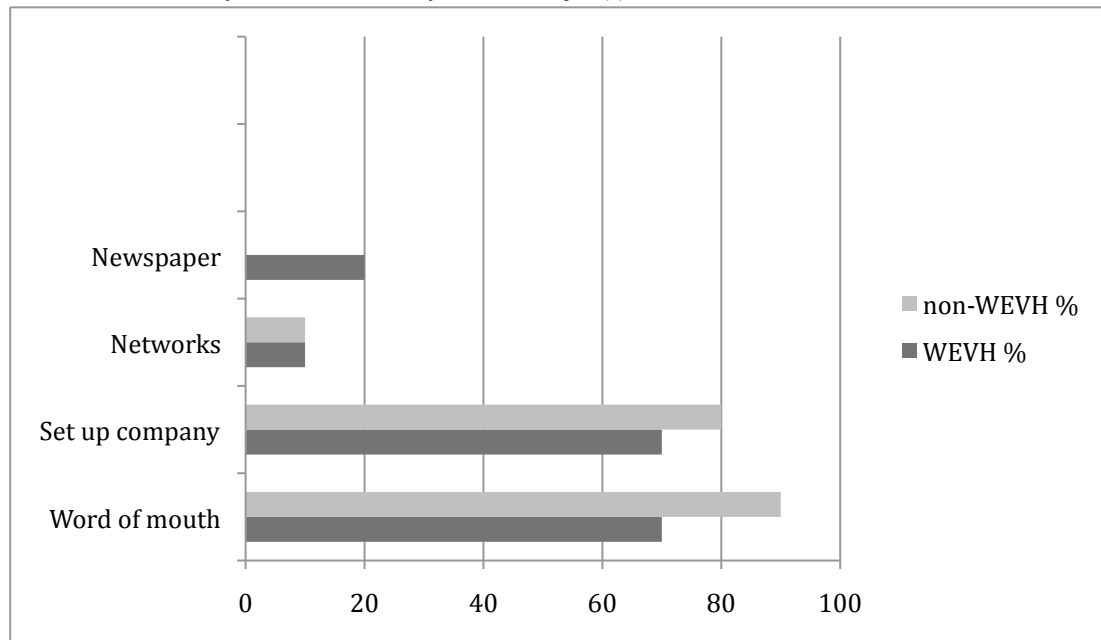
This question generated six responses from the women. The second column of table 7.8 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 7.8 How did you find out about your current job(s)?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Word of mouth	70	90	80
Set up company	70	60	65
Networks	10	10	10
Newspaper	20	0	10

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 7.8 are summarised below in table 7.8b and show a high percentage of both groups of women have set up their own companies and find employment through word of mouth which is problematic given people's tendencies to '*hire people in their own image*' (Gill 2007: 7).

Table 7.8b How did you find out about your current job(s)?



Both sets of women found work mainly through word of mouth. 70% of WEVH women and 90% of non-WEVH women mentioned this. *Questions also need to be raised about how successful informal networking is as a way of distributing work opportunities*" (Gill 2007: 6).

Int13 describes an informal women's network that keeps one another informed of jobs that they might be interested in.

Int13: "My friend, who you've just met, sent me, the two women, two friends who are both into digital media, one way or another, as it happens. One of whom has just emigrated to Australia and is working there and the other one Dr *, who I now working for ***** and has been involved with the arts circuit and has then gone onto the games circuit and more technical stuff over the years. Another thing, actually, a lot of my friends who are women who are into digital media have come through the arts, myself included and that applies to F*, I don't know if you've found her name mentioned, well she was the one. Both F* and M* sent me the job ad because they knew I was looking to move and finishing a short-term contract." (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Word of mouth is a way in which women can support each other and share helpful and interesting information and contacts. However, like the old boys network this system most definitely has its drawbacks in that you have to be in the loop to benefit and this means that exclusivity can be problematic and work against women in general or particular groups of women based on race, sexuality or disability.

Both sets of women, in the main, found work by setting up their own company. 70% of WEVH women and 80% of non-WEVH women mentioned this. Considering self-employment is a disproportionately male practice, in 2005, 18 per cent of male workers were self-employed as compared with 7 per cent of women (Walby 2006) and show that our figures are relatively high. Int9 setup a voluntary sector project from scratch after completing a multi-media course at the WEVH. Int9 was very influenced by her experience at the WEVH and sought to set up a similar project in her own area that was geared towards young people. Being around like-minded women at the WEVH inspired her to set up a community sector project that would benefit from the skills she had gained.

Int9: "I made my own job up! I wrote my own job description and spec because there wasn't a job like it, there wasn't a job description in place, so basically, I've managed to get quite a lot of funding in and then part of that

was obviously to appoint a project manager but I was actually the one bringing the money in and planning the projects, so I had to write all the job description for all of the posts, including my own, which at that time was quite difficult but as I said, because there wasn't those jobs there I had to make it up as kind of, what kind of roles and responsibilities would you have if you were doing this job, so that's how I did it.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

7.6. Chapter Summary

The results relating to the second theme of the thesis is presented in this chapter.

When looking at women’s lived experiences of the workplace in section 7.2 WEVH women worked in areas where more women were managing and non-WEVH women worked in more non-hierarchical set-ups which were usually managed badly. It could be said here that WEVH women were choosing to be in hierarchical positions where other women were managing them. When looking at whether women’s jobs were seen to be technical both groups largely thought that they were. More WEVH women thought that they weren’t seen as technical even if they actually were, again showing an awareness of how dominant society sees gender and technology. There was very little difference between the two groups as to whether they worked from the home or office and how they did this. When looking at women’s workload and how they managed it both groups were overworked and largely did project based work. When it came to finding work word of mouth and setting up their own company was most popular with both groups.

Chapter 8

8. Survey Results: Articulating Women's Position in the Contemporary Workplace

8.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the results relating to the third theme of the research: - language/ability to articulate women's position in the contemporary workplace. This was explored by focusing on the following four questions, 'What are women's career decisions based on?' 'Do you think women face particular barriers in the workplace?' 'How is conflict dealt with?' and 'What are your career prospects dependent upon?'

The main differences that came out of the first question were that non-WEVH women felt that women's career decisions were based on a combination of possessing particular skills, feeling passionate about your work and being confident and innovative enough to try and ensure a good quality of life (McRobbie 2004). WEVH women believed that women's career decisions changed with age and that childcare played an important factor, more so than skills and confidence (Ellen and Herman 2005). Both groups thought that quality of life was the priority but WEVH women appeared to have a better understanding of the wider constraints that face most women including finance whereas the non-WEVH women placed more emphasis on the individual qualities of the particular woman (Griffiths and Moore 2006). Interestingly Gill (2007) also found that the new media workers she interviewed did not cite finance as a reason for being attracted to the industry.

All of the women in the study felt that women faced barriers in the workplace (Walker 2004). Both acknowledged that sexism and lad culture were still prevalent and one woman from each group said that they lied about how old they were to their bosses and hoped that they appeared younger than their years as they felt that older people faced discrimination in their workplace (Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005; Gill 2007). Again, there was a significant difference in the number of WEVH women mentioning wider issues such as always having to be available for work, age and childcare issues (Simpson 1998; Von Hellens et al 2004; Ellen and Herman 2005). Non-WEVH women did mention that there had been an erasure of women's voices and that women didn't receive recognition for their work (Walker 2004). Conflict at work was more of an issue for non-WEVH women. 30% more non-WEVH women felt that conflict was dealt with badly at work with 20% more saying that conflict was resolved through having an informal chat. When asked about what their career prospects were dependent on 70% more non-WEVH women felt it was down to the individual networking skills of the woman whereas 40% more WEVH women put it down to social policy with this figure being reversed in that 40% more non-WEVH women thought that passion was a key (McRobbie 2004).

The third set of questions examines women's understanding of the contemporary workplace in terms of their language and ability to articulate this. How women view their position in workplace, the barriers they face and the conflicts that affect their career prospects are explored. The first question looks at what women's career decisions are based on and explores the work environment to see the different levels and types of support it offers. The second question looks to see if women face

barriers in the workplace and how these are dealt with and/or overcome. Question number three asks how conflict is dealt with, whether it is transparent and if and how it is resolved. Women's career prospects and what they are dependent on are examined in question four. The issue of part time work, project work and women's bargaining power are explored. In question number four women are asked what their career decisions are based on. Being available for work 24/7 and being seen as a player and the power that comes with these is also explored.

An open approach to data gathering was taken because a central principle of the research design was to examine women's lived experiences of the workplace. To achieve this it was important that all of their individual experiences were talked rather than limiting their responses. Limiting women's responses would have given a distorted view of what they consider to be important experiences from their point of view. Whilst this approach meant that a large amount of data was captured it also meant that it was done in an unbiased way.

8.1. Women's Position in the Workplace

Women were asked 'what are women's career decisions based on?'

This question generated eleven responses. The second column of table 8.9 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one.

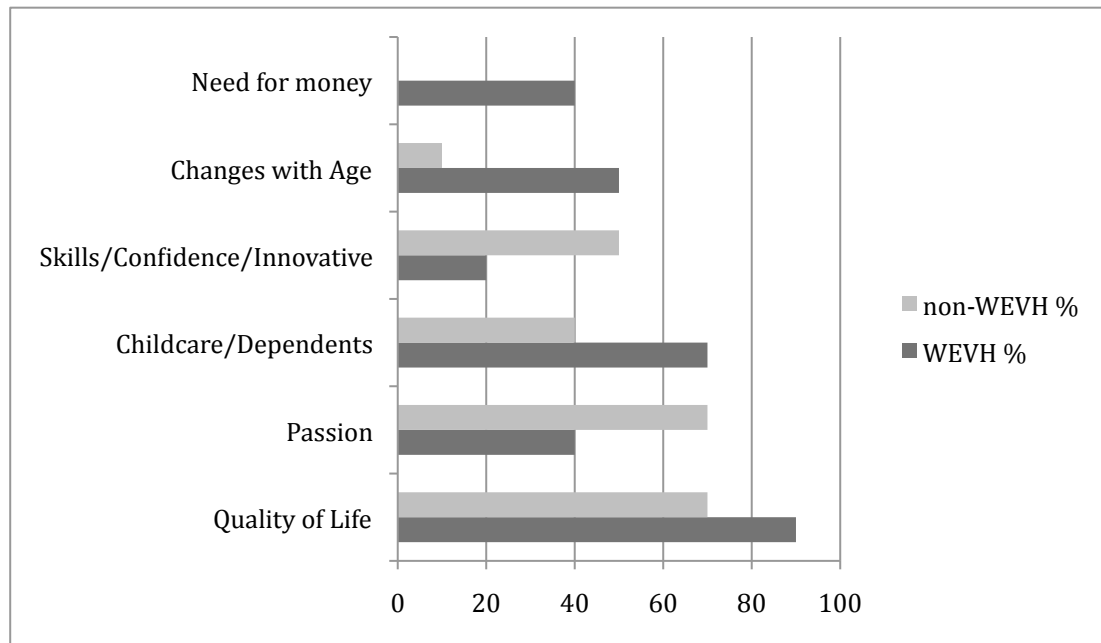
Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 8.9 What are women's career decisions based on?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Quality of life	90	70	80
Passion	40	70	55
Child/Family/Dependants	70	40	55
Right time/Place /Evolved	40	50	45
Personal ambition	30	50	40
Skills/Confidence/Innovative	20	50	35
Changes with age	50	10	30
Need for money	40	0	20
Support network	10	20	15
Independence	10	10	10
Socialisation	0	10	5

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 8.9 are summarised below in table 8.9b and show that in contrast to findings in the US (Ross 2003) non-WEVH women did not cite money as a major factor when considering their career (Gill 2007) whereas 40% more WEVH women do and also state that their needs change with age (Richards and Milestone 2000). WEVH women's decisions were based more around their children/family life whereas more non-WEVH women were driven by passion and a desire to use/develop their skills and confidence (Walker 2005; Gill 2007). These figures could also reflect the fact that less non-WEVH women have children or are perhaps in work situations that would make having children rather difficult (Gill 2007).

Table 8.9b What are women's career decisions based on?



40

40% of WEVH women mentioned money whereas none of the non-WEVH women did. Int15 cites that if indeed she did not need the money she would retire.

Int15: “Just cash, really. Mortgage, cash, a bit of stability, actually as in regular work, regular money. It's the only reason, if I won the lottery, I would retire.” (38-year-old WEVH woman)

WEVH women mentioned age related changes 40% more than non-WEVH. Int13 explains why her needs have changed, as she has got older.

Int13: “The choices I've made about my work have been a combination of factors that have changed over the years because the reasons why I used to choose things when I was younger are different to the reasons that I choose things for now. When I was younger I wanted to be involved with things that were exciting, cool, innovative, satisfying, rewarding, things that matched my interests, where I thought I could meet like-minded people and nice people, who had something about them and to have that excitement of working on something together with a shared goal that was interesting and maybe a bit challenging. Also money, maybe enough money to earn enough money to keep going which is how it used to be and now it's to earn enough money to pay the mortgage, which is different. As I've got older, I've become slightly disillusioned with that sort of culture because people get exploited by that

when they're young, of whatever gender and I'm a lot more aware of what I want my working environment or working conditions to be. So, work life balance, have some control, independence and autonomy over my working conditions has massive appeal and if I never had to work in an office again, I'd be happy. This is one of the major, major hurdles for me in digital media is that I don't actually like working on a computer. I don't like what it does to my eyes, to my body, to my brain, the radiation all of that stuff bothers me but I love the technology! I'm a bit stymied, really.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int13's comments on this are interesting in that she mentions both men and women.

In some of her other comments she also talks about gender in quite a liberal, biologically determined way in that she will eventually want to have children and that women are very much influenced by their biological bodies. Int13 is a highly regarded woman who works for an international gaming company. She is the only woman in her sector and has to liaise with the top male managers via a middle layer of male managers.

Non-WEVH women mentioned passion 30% more than WEVH women. For Int2 passion is still what drives her artwork, which is driven by her politics and a desire to transform and change. Here it can be seen that Int2 also firmly connects passion with politics and for her the personal is political. This difference in situatedness was quite consistent and where not then some other radical influence such as sexuality was present.

Int2: “It's got to be something that you can care about, that you can buy into, something that suits you, in a political sense. I'm into all the old stuff, about the personal being political, that's actually quite a big part of my creative practice, working to change or to transform perceptions or constructions of reality and so on.” (53-year-old WEVH woman)

Int5 describes how difficult it is to attract younger women into the radio station and feels that showing by example will instill confidence in other women that the indie music scene is a great place to be for women. The lack of women, she maintains is down to women's history being erased therefore they are not seen to be doing

particular jobs so young women think they're not suitable for women (Wajcman 1991). It5 is a bisexual blind Jewish woman whose political thinking has clearly been shaped by her life experiences. She is very active on the Manchester Independent music scene and runs a radio station with like-minded people. She is also very clear about how sexist the music scene is outside of their group (Richards and Milestone 2000).

Int5: "I think a lot of time you're led by example, especially when you're younger and you want to get involved with something, when there seems to be a lack of women involved in something it can be quite off putting and I've been thinking about that a lot with our station, because there are a lack of women and it's how you bring them in without seeming like your using them just because of their gender. But also how you make it clear that it is not an unwelcoming place for women, that it is a place where women are welcome but it's hard to know how to do that. I know if you looked on the website and you saw all the Djs profiled are men then that might put you off. I think example is a big part of it and seeing other people doing it. I mean the DIY music that I'm involved with is perhaps more positive in that it's at least half women or female dominated so sometimes I forget how sexist the rest of the industry is, that I'm in a little bubble where everything's fine and sometimes you forget. You go to gigs or see programmes where they're focusing on the history of music and women are virtually erased, so it's still a part of my day? It's the hardest question to answer." (25-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Non-WEVH women mentioned skills/confidence/being innovative 30% more than WEVH women. Int14 talks about how she sees her work as a creative process and is ideas driven rather than driven by the need to have a career. Int14 is an Asian lesbian woman whose working life and political life are as one. There is no division and like many women her career is non-linear (Walker 2004).

Int14: "Well, I don't think I've ever really had a career. It's interesting because this guy once said he had a portfolio career, we have portfolio careers, including me in that and I said, a, I don't have a portfolio career and b, I don't want one, I'm not interested in it. I'm interested in making artwork for changing the world to see that that's a career, it's like your life, really..." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

WEVH women mentioned childcare/dependents 30% more. Int1 says that she changed careers in order for her to maintain a family life. The fashion and music

industry that she worked in wouldn't have allowed her the family life that she wanted so she changed to academia. This pattern was also identified by Ellen and Herman (2005) who found that women would choose to work in sectors such as the voluntary and public to ensure that they could manage their childcare responsibilities. She also believes that change is coming in the arts world as more men are having responsibility for children and can't for example do a 6-month residency. It is men with childcare responsibilities who are challenging the setup and practises that would have previously excluded women with children.

Int1: "I would say opportunity for me, I made a conscious decision to change careers when I was pregnant with my eldest daughter. I was working, I wasn't in academia then, I was doing late nights because I was working in fashion and music. I was doing a lot of late night work at gigs and things like that. So when I was pregnant I realised, or thought for me, that I couldn't continue. Well, I think there are definite gender issues, absolutely, yeah I think there are expectations of certain routes through for women and sometimes you just have to choose which ones to argue and which ones to fight and I wouldn't go for a lifetime of fighting so sometimes I would go with the flow of what's possible. I'm a pragmatist, yeah, I think they have but I think that the way certain aspects of the art world are set up, for example are so set up for originally, you would say for men but now because so many men are looking after children you would say they are set up for people without children. That's started to change I think now, I was saying the other day because the men are putting their foot down and saying they can't, as is typical with all or very many situations. Absolutely, and the model of residencies in the art world is now being challenged." (47-year-old WEVH woman)

Int3 talks about her time working at the University where she witnessed women having children and men having children being perceived differently. Men's status went up and women's went down (Spender 1995).

Int3: "Most women who I know have had pretty negative experiences of trying to balance careers and families and children. I know a lot of that is to do with just the practicalities of that but I do feel women are... the perception of them in the workplace changes massively once they've had children."

Interviewer: "Right, in what way?"

Int3: "I've certainly noticed it when I was in the university, there are men, fairly young men working in my department and it seemed to be a sign of maturity in a man to have a wife and family, whereas for the women it seemed to be career suicide if they had children! Ok, I know this was a while

ago but I think those double standards do persist, especially if that was in more formal places like that. The place that, I work for now it's quite trendy and most of the blokes there have got children. It isn't like they've all got young families, so it's very different in that respect.” (58-year-old WEVH woman)

WEVH women mentioned quality of life 20% more than non-WEVH women. Int6 describes how she could have been more successful but that the price of stress was too much to pay. Int6's comments are interesting because the difficulties that she has had with the working environment have all been about inequality and the difficulty of being a woman in the multimedia industry. It appears that for a lot of women the only way that they can have some quality of life is by making huge compromises in other areas of their lives and for Int6 this has been financial.

Int6: “Just having a good life really, for me and having a nice life, not being too stressed, I could have been more ambitious and I could have done more, I could have been more successful. I have occasionally gone down that route and then I've backed out of it, its more quality of life for me.” (49-year-old WEVH woman)

8.2. Barriers in the Workplace

Women were asked ‘do you think women face particular barriers in the workplace? [Then] What are these barriers and how do they work? Are they recognised and if so discussed?’

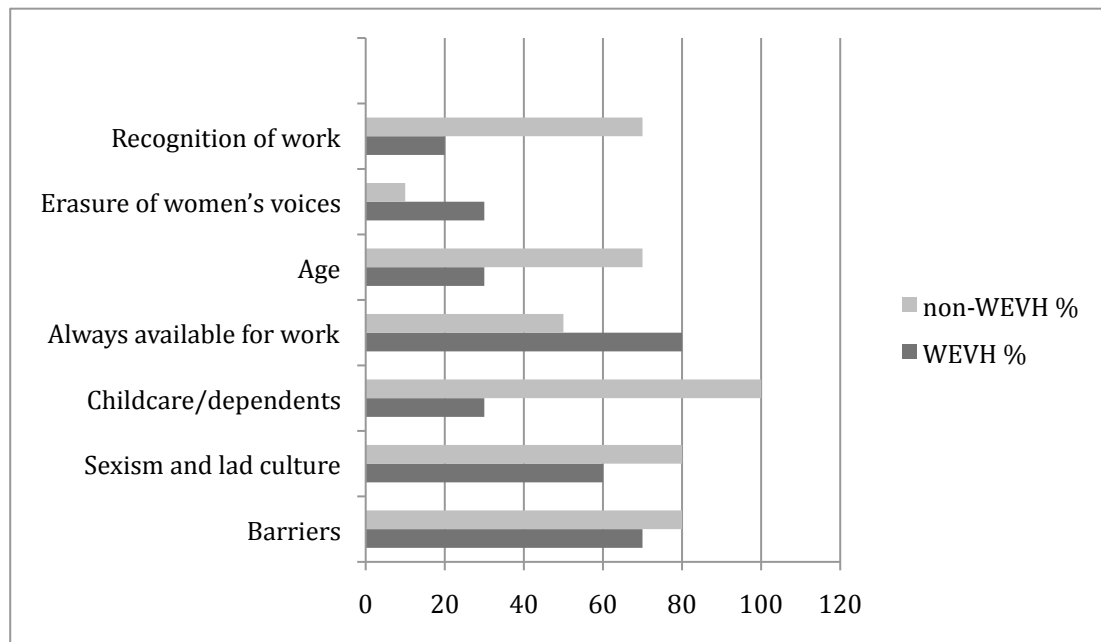
This question generated eleven responses. The second column of table 8.10 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 8.10 Do you think women face particular barriers in the workplace?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Barriers	100	100	100
Sexism lad culture	80	80	80
Childcare/Dependents	100	40	70
Always available for work	60	10	35
Age	30	10	20
Class	10	10	10
Erasure of past women's voices	0	20	10
Bargaining power	20	0	10
Recognition own work	0	20	10
Nationality	10	10	10
Glass ceiling	10	0	5

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 8.10 are summarised below in table 8.10b and show that WEVH women thought that having children/dependents and always having to be available for work were the main barriers (Ellen and Herman 2005). Non-WEVH women, like WEVH women mentioned sexism and lad culture (Richards and Milestone 2000).

Table 8.10b Do you think women face particular barriers in the workplace?



All of the women thought that there were barriers. 100% of each group stated that women did face barriers in the workplace. The non-WEVH women mentioned the

erasure of women's voices and the non-recognition of women's work in this question. It would appear that this could be quite contradictory but there are a few women in this group whose views are more radical than the majority of the others and it would appear that this was due to other influences in their lives like their sexuality, race and/or disability. WEVH women commented 60% more on childcare issues and 50% more on having to be always available for work. It would appear from these figures that the WEVH women are indeed a more aware group of women when it comes to recognising the barriers that women face in the workplace. Again, this would have been part of discussions that would have taken place during their training at the WEVH and the training practices and policies of the WEVH would have highlighted both childcare issues and the issues that women can have with time (see chapter 3, Walker 2004).

The largest difference here was in the mentioning of childcare/dependents as a barrier. WEVH women raised this 60% more than non-WEVH women.

Int4 talks about how her husband's attitude made her feel anxious about being a good mother. Int4 came to the WEVH when her and her husband moved here. He was a diplomat and she was keen to improve her skills but also very mindful of her child and her responsibilities in this area. The training that Int4 received enabled her to see how her husband's attitude had been affecting how she saw the situation and through continuing her training and receiving the help and support of the WEVH she went on to complete her Masters Degree and is now doing her PhD (Walker 2004; Dyson 2003).

Int4: "Also my husbands approach, his attitude in those days was a bit difficult, he used to say, you are a mother, don't forget you are a mother. He always reminded me of this and maybe I was also a bit scared, 'if I do that maybe I won't be a good mother'. He had a little bit of influence on me." (47-year-old WEVH woman)

Int9 talks about how childcare commitments can often mean that you miss out on career perks or opportunities that men have.

Int9: “The only things I would say are things like, because of the nature of the work we do, we are invited quite a lot to international conferences to give speeches and talks, sometimes it’s difficult if you’ve got children and families, you don’t get to go that often as you would like or you have to turn things down because you’ve got to look after the children, whereas I suppose some male counterparts would not find it as difficult to do. So there are certain aspects of our role, it’s like, oh there’s a conference on, we’ve got to organise so much to be able to get out for a few days like all the childcare, while you’re away, who’s going to pick up the kids, who is going to feed the children while you’re away, who’s going to deal with all the emergency contacts, details, who’s going to know where you’re staying. It’s a barrier in terms of being able to develop because it’s those times when you get opportunities to meet people and where you network, so I think that sometimes we miss out on that and because of the nature of new media that a lot of the deals are done outside of the workplace and it’s those after hours when you go down the pub, and you meet and sometimes we’re excluded from that because we have to go home and look after the children. Sometimes I find that quite hard because I know that’s where a lot of these people meet and go ‘I do this, I do that’ and we can miss out on that and it can be a barrier. Sometimes we miss out and that can be a barrier in terms of developing us as an organisation because the boys are all in there doing it in the backroom. So, there are aspects where there are barriers, necessarily that can stop us in what we’re doing but it doesn’t enable us to have quite as many opportunities.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int9 runs a voluntary sector new media company that is very aware of childcare issues. The examples that she gives for when childcare is not supported is interesting because they are very similar to the type of issues faced by multimedia artists who are expected to take up residencies. In Int9’s case in spite of being in the position to offer some support in a work context this is very limited in that you can’t offer 24/7 childcare therefore it’s the times of the meetings that need to change and societies attitude to women as always being available during ‘after work’ hours to take care of the children (Rees 1998).

WEVH women mentioned always having to be available for work 50% more than non-WEVH women. Int2 talks about the work culture and how children or the fact

that you have a life outside of work are just not taken into consideration when work patterns and schedules are planned or discussed. This 24/7 culture ensures that women are kept out of the new media workplace because coupled with a 'presenteeism' culture and one where part-time workers are seen as temporary 'fillers' then women's non-linear careers are constantly hijacked by these gender-biased work ethics present in our culture (Moore et al 2005a, 2005b; Lewis and Cooper 2005; Gatrel 2005) Again the problems of childcare around working away from home is raised by Int2 and how this isn't discussed. Artists are expected to be available at all times and to take up residencies or attend conferences abroad despite having the responsibility of their children. This is clearly very problematic.

Int2: "I had one child and he's grown up now, I have got quite a lot of freedom now about what I do because I don't have a partner, either. I think for a lot of women it would be difficult to apply for and do some of the things that I've been doing, because you've got to be absolutely flexible, you can't be relied on whatsoever. I don't have a life where I really know what I'm doing for the next week or month or whatever. If I had to support someone else apart from myself it would be very difficult, if I had childcare responsibilities or responsibilities to a partner or whatever, those sort of commitments I wouldn't be able to do what I'm doing at the moment and I think that must be problematic. These things aren't discussed, not at all, with the projects that I'm working on. I think a couple people like the administrators and the project managers, they have that problem when they were away at international conferences and they experienced problems with that." (53-year-old WEVH woman)

WEVH mentioned age as a barrier 20% more than non-WEVH. Int3 talks about how she feels that her opportunities have become more limited due to her age and that she hasn't disclosed her true age to her work colleagues because of the culture. Since this interview Int3 hasn't had her contract re-newed and has now been unemployed for over a year. Older women are constantly discriminated against in the new media industry in much the same way as the music industry in that they are often expected to be seen as 'players' as in being out and about networking. This is also however seen as a role for much younger women (Richards and Milestone 2000).

Int3: "I definitely feel my opportunities are limited. I'm not sure if it's just me thinking that but I'm definitely conscious of it, now I'm over 50, it's like arggh!"

Interviewer: "Could you put your finger on that; I mean have you had anything said?"

Int3: "The companies that I work for, they're all about ten years younger than me but they don't know how old I am, so I don't tell them!" (58-year-old WEVH woman)

Non-WEVH women mentioned erasure of women's voices 20% more than WEVH women. Int5 talks about the vicious circle that is created when women's voices are erased and how it then perpetuates the myth that there are no women in the industry therefore women think it's not a suitable place for them to be. This tactic has been around for as long as women have been inventing technology. The eradication of women's voices and contribution to the world in terms of technology has always been from our hunter-gatherer days right through to present time (Wajcman 1991; Richards and Milestone 2000; McRobbie 2004).

Int5: "Yeah, it's difficult because of the divide between the DIY music industry, or bits of the DIY music industry and the music industry in general. I think the music industry in general that I've had involvement with, there is aspects of the mainstream industry like workshops to try and figure out why these discrepancies occur and it's just going back to the idea that under representation forms a vicious circle, because lack of representation leads to people feeling unwelcome and feeling that an environment is hostile. I think it's the erasure of women's voices in the music industry in the past. I think one thing is that women tend to feel more comfortable in the DIY parts of the industry where people can create their own environments and have more control. Experiences that I've had within the mainstream music industry feel a lot more uncomfortable because it's as under your control, so and I know artists who we've worked with on the label and the radio show tend to feel out of their comfort zone with the bigger environments. I know a lot of the female musicians I have known have said that the sexism that has been aimed at them has been when they've had big breaks and they've been playing bigger gigs, that kind of environment where they move from their normal environment where they have control over their gigs to playing where you're on a big tour with a bigger band, playing bigger venues and people are making sexist assumptions, sound engineers will only talk to male band members rather than female band member, that sort of thing. And I think what it does do is limit female musicians careers, I think that what it does do

is make them feel very quickly uncomfortable within a mainstream, corporate music setting. It means that they tend to stay in an alternative setting where they can create their own rules and do things their own way but obviously that is limiting.” (25-year-old non-WEVH woman)

80% of each group mentioned sexism and lad culture. The women in this section give various accounts of how they have perceived sexism in their working lives. The sexism they experience is often difficult to pinpoint but is most definitely there and for others it has been quite blatant and very offensive. This trend of difficult to pinpoint sexism (Tierney 1995; Devine 1992; Richards and Milestone 2000; Gill 2002, 2007; Banks and Milestone 2011) and the more overt and offensive variety of sexism (Henwood 1991, cited in Henwood 1996) clearly hasn't gone away despite an attitude found in new media companies (Gill 2007; Banks and Milestone 2011) that this is no longer an issue and indeed some women also feel that we have moved beyond this type of inequality (McRobbie 2004).

Int1: “No, I think that absolutely there are barriers; my experience is that it's very, very difficult to get hold of it; it's not tangible so there is nothing you can really specifically argue against. But somehow there seems to be a network of communication between the some of the men that works very differently and there was a route through to the hierarchy of the institution. Actually, that's changing now but that was my experience when I first came here, that it was definitely like an old boy's network. Part of it is to do with, the whole thing of in whose image the culture was built and I think it was that, some of those old things, what was valued and what was seen as good behaviour and it did feel very much like it was good behaviour were built around a set of values and beliefs that were very male. So it was like rubbing up against something to which you didn't really fit and that's exhausting.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

Int1 talks about marching to the male stride (Rees 1998). Int1 has however also stated elsewhere that she believes that in her institution things are changing and that this is due to having a new female manager and that the men in her team want change too. She also said that the difficulty with this is that change could be down to

the personal politics of who has control and is very much concerned that a merger with another larger institution could mean that the progress they have made could well be turned around.

Int3: "I remember when I was a student at the university and having some sort of a computer course, this was quite a while ago, when I was doing my PhD and I remember this horrible man in the computing department saying I had a bit missing in my brain because I couldn't write a programme to generate random numbers and I didn't even know what he was talking about. So, yes I would say it was very Supportive." (58-year-old WEVH woman)

Int3's experience of Higher Education establishments has been well documented by (Henwood 1991a, 1991b). Blatant sexism was the norm and when interviewing a Head of Department at the institution where she was conducting her survey Henwood actually recorded his sexist opinions (Henwood 1991, cited in Henwood 1996). Sexism is still being recorded by researchers albeit in a less overt way (Banks and Milestone 2011). The problem with the new flatbed structures of the new media companies is that there are no formal channels to take these complaints to if in fact they would be acknowledged.

Int6: "Yeah, I think they do in that industry, I still think it's very male oriented, cliquey. The barriers are often that you don't go to the pub at lunchtime with the lads and have a few beers. So you are not in the clique. Yeah, there's a lot of friend's stuff going on and favouritism and that sort of thing and it's unspoken but I don't think that the women get enough... I don't think the women are respected as much as other departments in Macclesfield it's different, there writers and stuff, there's medical writers and that's different, there is a lot of women there and they're bosses and it's different, they're more respected but not in the visual thing." (49-year-old WEVH woman)

As can be seen from Int6's comment the going down to the pub scenario is still happening so the old boys' network does appear to be very much alive and kicking. Int6 also said that men will often return to work quite drunk which apart from anything else i.e. not getting their work done is also a state that can be quite

frightening for a lot of women and for some a culture that they are just not part of but feel that they have to put up with it in their workplace for fear of being seen as 'feminists' or not having a sense of humour (Bradley et al 2007).

Int13: "Having to listen to the crap that men talk about over their heads, the culture. Do you mean barriers to the workplace or particular barriers in the workplace? Yeah, that, the fact that if you're in a male dominated environment there are certain things that you have to play along with that may make you feel uncomfortable. People making assumptions about what you do, that you should be making tea and coffee, all that classic stuff."

Interviewer: "Are these discussed, are they discussed or acknowledged in the workplace? Are they resolved?"

Int13: "Not a great deal, unless you acknowledge it, I mean some of it is insidious. Because we are a very small company we make teas and coffees for everyone, like other people's clients when they come in. like for example, I went for a meal a couple of weeks ago, I thought it would be really nice to go for a little good-bye before I go. The two bosses quite often won't come out for a group meal because they're really busy so anyway, I was there with four of my male colleagues, including one of my bosses when it came to ordering the food and sorting out paying the bill, he assumed that I was going to do it because I was the project manager, but I felt that it wasn't because I was the project manager, that it was because I was a woman and I was really pissed off. It's a small thing but those things happen regularly and to actually challenge that assumption is quite hard but I actually just did it! I probably made some sarky comment but went and did it, actually in fact, one of my other colleagues said, why do you think she's got to do it? You know, but that's a small thing but even in this day and age this guy is younger than me so what hope is there?" (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

8.3. Conflict Resolution

Women were asked 'how is conflict dealt with?

[Then] Is there transparency and formal channels for resolution?'

This question generated six responses from the women. The second column of table 8.11 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both

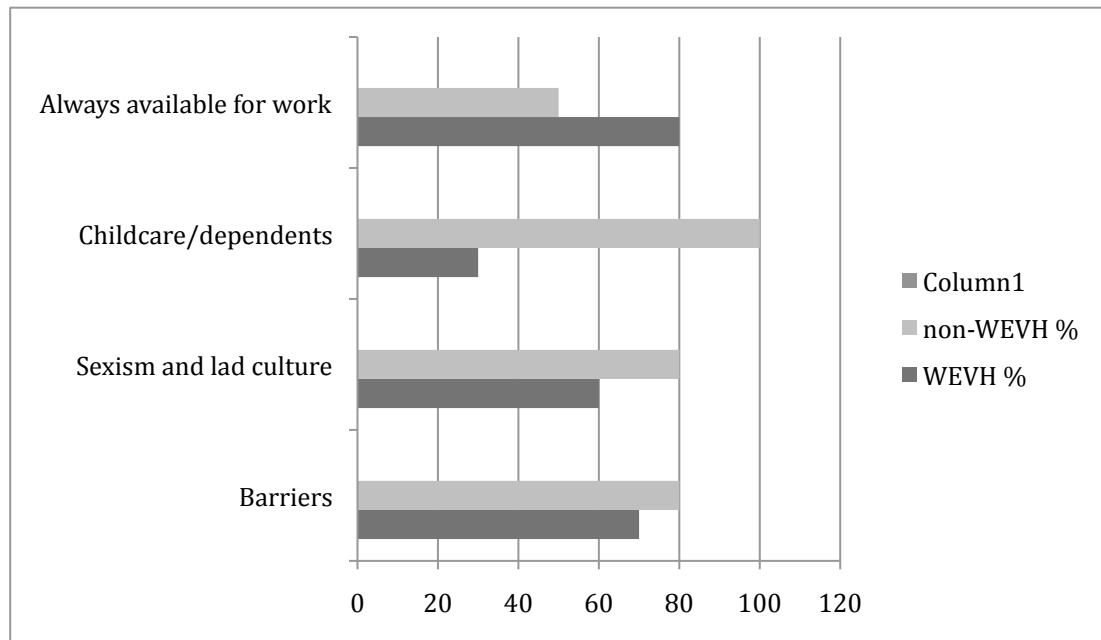
groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 8.11 How is conflict dealt with?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Dealt with	100	100	100
Badly	40	70	55
Formal procedures	40	50	45
Chatting	20	40	30
Very Patriarchal	0	10	5
Depends who is in Charge Despite Policy	10	0	5

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 8.11 are summarised below in table 8.11b with the main difference being that 30% more non-WEVH women felt that conflict was dealt with badly in their organisation despite 10% more saying that formal procedures were in place to deal with complaints. There was a slight recognition that this could be due to old patterns of patriarchy being present in the workplace and affecting the management of the organisation (Banks and Milestone 2011).

Table 8.11b How is conflict dealt with?



All of the women mentioned that conflict was dealt with. 30% more non-WEVH women thought that conflict in the workplace was dealt with badly. The women here describe conflict situations where there is no real process in place to deal with it. Int2 talks about how conflict resolution is dealt with in projects in the art world in that there are no clear channels and this in turn makes it difficult for people to challenge anything without the risk of being seen as a troublemaker therefore risking not getting future work (Richards and Milestone 2000; Gill 2002, 2007). The lack of formal channels and the attitude that we are already an equal opportunities organisation so therefore do not have to do anything to improve matters is very much evident in the new media companies represented here. Having open plan offices where the bosses mix with the workers and where there are no 'visible' lines of authority appears to be some sort of mark that the company is indeed too cool for such matters and that mentioning them sets you apart from the in crowd who just want to get ahead and have some fun (Gill 2002, 2007).

Int2: "It is very bad, very bad. I mean the cultural producer was just terminated at the end and I sent her a message saying, 'did you fall or were

you pushed?' and she said, 'pushed, well, lynched more like'. The conflict resolution is very bad and we weren't actually told why, what the problem was and so on. There is a whole set of different things, they weren't very honest or open ways of dealing with this, it wasn't discussed. It's increasingly true in the art world; they don't actually want very challenging people to be engaged. The people who get the commissions are the ones who are very charming; it becomes very difficult so conflict becomes a very difficult situation. While it's good to challenge things it means that you're risking making yourself unpopular for future projects and no, there aren't clear channels through which conflict can be resolved and a lot of this stuff can be very subjective when it comes to art works.” (53-year-old WEVH woman)

Int2's example shows just how far the 'bosses' will take matters when they don't fit in with how they like things to be done and in the process a clear message is sent out to anyone else who dares to transgress the unwritten rules and codes of behaviour that allow certain individuals to progress whilst others are simply 'sacked' without question or come back.

Int14 describes a situation where although there are formal procedures in place because the people she is dealing with are teachers and will be working to local authority guidelines, how they dealt with her as a freelancer was quite different in that there was simply no dialogue.

Int14: “Well, with the last project I did with creative partnerships, there was, and I went to the creative agent who asked for a meeting with the assistant head and the two teachers and they said, 'no'. So, that's my experience of school and that was a particular thing but in terms of conflicts with other people, I would say that people in the industry as a whole just aren't very well trained in dealing with other people. I've done this relational dynamic coaching and it's about self-awareness, really, that's the lacking thing. People are always going on about the money for the project or time but actually, people are the most expensive thing for projects and I think dealing with people is not valued enough, so I think dealing with conflict is not valued enough and it tends to be very hierarchical so if somebody says, my way is the right way and I'm the boss, I think one of the things about digital media is when you're talking about aesthetics that it's very subjective so I think conflict does come up about that. The end outcome of a project and unless you're working very collaboratively, you're usually the person who is making a decision about it or you...I would say women who I've worked with, we have had conflicts but we've just dealt with them in different ways and we've compared our experiences with other things and the women I've worked with

We have had conflicts and we've dealt with them in different ways, and were compared our experiences with other things and the women I've Worked with have had an awareness that they want a conflict to be resolved, whereas other people that I've worked with, they've not wanted a conflict to be resolved, they're interested in their way and I'm not sure if that's an ego thing.” (46 year WEVH woman)

20% more non-WEVH women said that conflict was resolved by having a chat. For Int10 being straightforward and honest has always worked when dealing with her clients and chatting about any issues means that conflict is avoided. This WEVH woman has worked in a number of different environments over the years including all three sectors - the public, private and voluntary and now chooses to work with her partner and to not employ any other people. Like a number of women in this survey she prefers to deal with conflict on a one-to-one basis. One of the main complaints about other companies and organizations is their inability to deal with conflict in an appropriate and acceptable way and this alone has been one of the factors that has led some of the women in this study to set up their own companies and actively remain small so that they do not have to deal with conflict in the workplace other than on a one to one basis with their client. This is in keeping with the findings of Gill who found that *‘A particular anxiety related to the responsibility of hiring other people.’* (Gill 2007: 7)

Int10: “Not in the work that I do, though I rarely come up against any conflict in the NM business because I think there is kind of respect from both sides, really. But I think I generally provide what people want and they're happy with. I wouldn't say that there is generally any reason for conflict to arise but I wouldn't say that I'd deal with it very well, if it did. It's not something that I'm comfortable dealing with, at all but again I think that probably comes down to confidence in the work that you do. If I wasn't confident about the work that I was doing then that could create problems. I'll probably just stick with what I know, I'm not somebody who says I'll do something, if I can't provide it or know someone who can provide it then I'll be quite honest and try to provide the services in another way, or I'll suggest somebody else who can help them. I'm not there to tell people that I can do something when I can't, again, I think people respect that because I think there has been a lot of

problems, just looking at search engine optimization websites, I've come across people who I've built websites for being contacted by people and I can see that they're paying a lot more money to them than they paid to me in the first place and you can look behind the scenes and see that there's not much happening. I think a lot of people have been very misled and get quite protective, understandably so 'I think it helps, not bullshitting, really. Being honest.'" (46-year-old WEVH woman)

10% more non-WEVH women said that their workplace had formal procedures to deal with conflict. Women talk here about how formal channels can work but again it depends on the individuals involved and their will to work in a co-operative manner. Int8 talks about bullying at a local University despite there being formal procedures in place. Int8's account shows that even with formal procedures in place sexism and misogyny can still raise their ugly heads and indeed in this case seemed to be an acceptable part of the culture (Henwood 1996).

Int8: "Absolutely, through formal channels. There wasn't, I didn't experience any bullying through the university although there was, within one department a woman who was quite high up and you do hear the guys saying, she's obviously slept her way to the top because ****is very direct, she knows what she's talking about and she can come across as quite harsh and I. the guys that I know on a personal level say they do find that quite intimidating. It's easier to laugh it off, rather than saying you know what, she is really good at what she does and I am intimidated by her and I want to take her down a peg or two in a male environment rather than just hold their hands up. Some women do think that she can be a bit harsh and don't like that I on the other hand quite respect what she's done and how she's got there and never had a problem with her so ...yeah." (37-year-old non-WEVH)

8.4. Career Prospects

Women were asked 'what are your career prospects dependent on?'

This question generated nine responses from the women. The second column of table 8.12 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both

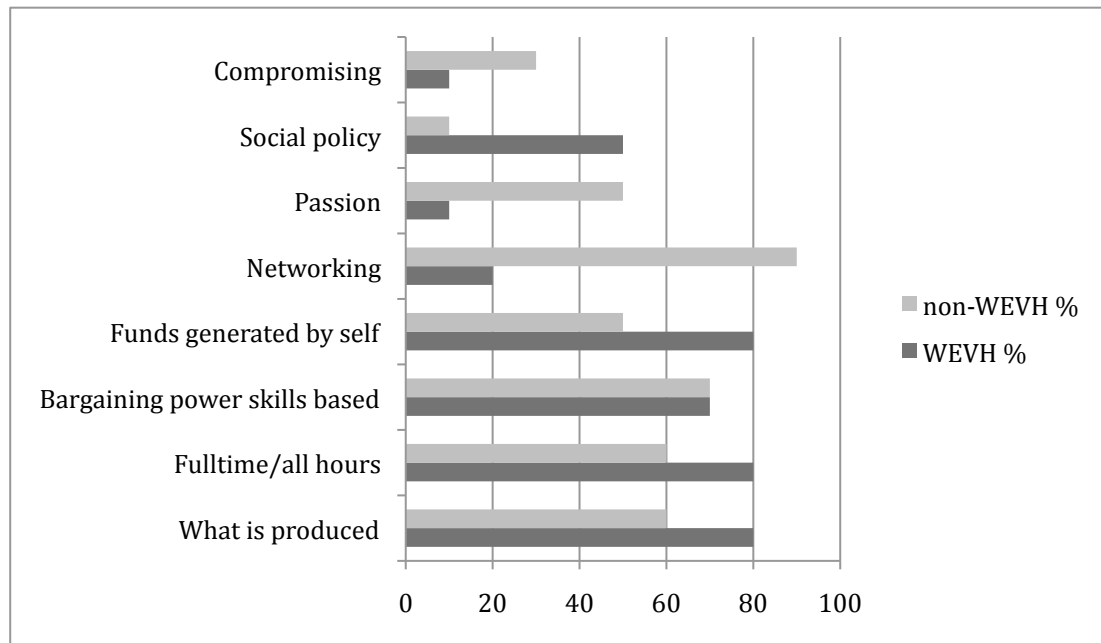
groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 8.12 What are your career prospects dependent on?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
What is produced	80	60	70
Full time/working all hrs	80	60	70
Bargaining power based on skills/abilities	70	70	70
Funding/money generated by self	80	50	65
Networking	20	90	55
Passion	10	60	35
Social policy	50	10	30
Compromise fit in with mainstream	10	30	20
Boss's ref	0	10	5

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 8.12 are summarised below in table 8.12b with the differences being that 70% non-WEVH women believe their career prospects are dependent on successful networking and 40% more believing passion is the key with 40% more non-WEVH women thinking that social policy has more of a role to play. Again, the influence of liberal feminist politics come through here with the non-WEVH women believing that success is down to the individual woman as opposed to social policy (Henwood 1998).

Table 8.12b What are your career prospects dependent on?



70% more non-WEVH women mentioned networking in comparison to WEVH women. Int7 talks about the need for networking and how she believes this and her passion for what she does will help her through these difficult financial times. Int7 is a lesbian non-WEVH woman who has spent a good number of years networking in the Manchester area on gay issues. Her attitude falls very much into the more liberal feminist side in that she believes that individual hard work and determinism is what will ensure success. It could also be the fact that she is very well connected and doesn't have any children Gill (2007) or dependants and is willing to work all hours, is relatively young, still enjoys the scene and is willing to travel.

Int7: "It's been really interesting with the economic climate because people have said, oh, you're really going to struggle. It was interesting, a number of people said to me, I can't believe you're jacking in Blackpool, in this current climate. But I really believe that if you want to work, and if you're good at what you do and you're passionate and you believe it will be alright then it will and it has been. And I've spoken to other people who've said that companies who would expect to suffer in the climate have had their best year because we're really passionate and get out there and keep doing. So, and I know it's easy for me to say that because there are industries and people have

been made redundant but for me, that's how it works.”(39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

40% more non-WEVH women mentioned passion than WEVH women. The women here give various accounts of what it is about how their passion for their work drives them. Here, women, both WEVH and non-WEVH talk about their passion for work. The main difference is that the non-WEVH woman believes that this is what has made her successful whereas the WEVH woman talks about it in terms of what drives her (Moore et al 2005a).

Int4: “I have to say for me, photography is my passion, I am more happy when I am taking photographs, you know I have to be satisfied but this came to me with experience. I don't care about money, I don't care about 'to make a name', this and that, otherwise I wouldn't be doing this social documentary photography because it's not about you anymore, you kind of become neutral. No, my personal satisfaction and also this feeling of I'm doing something worthwhile.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

Int8: “Me, being driven and passionate and support from both friends and the outside network as well. Finance and the drive to push that forward, as well.”
Interviewer: “Would you say that your career prospects are dependent on you being seen as a player?”

Int8: “Absolutely, it's dependent on me getting out there, making the contacts and knowing what I'm talking about, being available. And I think that technology should enable you to do that much more easily, now, you've got the phone, my mobile phone, anyone can get in touch with me via video, Skype, or text or phone. There's lot's of social networks that I'm engaged with like twitter and Facebook and linked in.” (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

WEVH women listed social policy 40% more than non-WEVH women. Int17 and Int3 are both concerned about the cuts and their job security. Both Int3 and Int17 see these policy measures as being very much to do with the political climate and both are aware that their age is factor that in the new media industry they must take into consideration, which is why Int17 opted for the relative safety of Higher Education. *‘Insecurity was a pervasive feature of many respondents’ lives. Low pay meant that few had pensions or inability-to-work insurance, or other benefits, and this caused*

considerable concern - particularly among older participants' (Gill 2007: 7). Since her interview Int3 has been made redundant and although actively sought work and is highly qualified has been unemployed for over a year.

Int17: "My research within the university, I won't leave university anymore, unless there is something great coming up that is really different. You could always leave for another university but I wouldn't leave an academic environment at my age, I'm kind of a bit more that half-way through now and I started late, you know and was working for ten or 15 years on projects, you forget about security. I just want to do things for which I have support." (46-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int3: "Is to do with completing the projects, like you said and being seen to be available as a player? Yes, definitely, I'm also in a sense, I do feel vulnerable because a lot of the work that I do has been funded through central government, a lot of the work that I've done has been to do with social policy, and all of it's had a connection with the internet, with New Media. Like the Community Broadband, this project that I'm working on now is all about getting information to young people using NM platforms and that sort of thing. So, if the money moves, I do feel very vulnerable."

Interviewer: "Are you part time or full time?"

Int3: "I sort of work pretty much full-time at the moment."

Interviewer: "Are part-time workers taken seriously and what is their bargaining power?"

Int3: "No, they're not taken very seriously, we're not even represented at company meetings." (58-year-old WEVH woman)

WEVH women mentioned funds 30% more than non-WEVH women. Here we can see from Int1's comment that the Higher Education system is very much dependent on the monies brought in through the various channels by their staff as well as the recruitment of their pupils and that her job is dependent on how successful she is at doing this therefore working all hours to achieve the targets set by the University is something that she believes has to be accepted rather than challenged. It does appear to be the case that even the more radical feminists in the survey will accept having to work over and beyond the call of duty if it is at all possible for them to work around it with having childcare or dependent issues.

Int1: “Yeah, it would definitely be on what's delivered, research output, funding brought in any big repositioning of courses, big increase in student numbers brought in, anything measurable.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

A high percentage of both sets of women, 80% WEVH and 60% non-WEVH thought that what is produced affected their career prospects. Int2 talks about how what she produces and also the way in which she produces affect her career prospects. Her integrity in her artwork is just as crucial as producing it. Int2 has also talked about the lack of transparency when it came to disagreements on projects and how some people were just dismissed without being given any feedback as to why. She also talked about how female middle managers arranged for technical guys to oversee her work despite her being the most technical person amongst them. This was done on the orders of the next level of management that were male.

Int2: “My career prospects are dependent on me making really good work and that the work speaks for itself and that I continue to find people that work with integrity and who aren't afraid to challenge and who are actually quite interested in doing that and that I continue to know enough of them to sustain me also that kind of builds up something so even though there are these skirmishes the work plus this growing body of people who you kind of know, so that sort of critical dialogue is a really important in the making.” (53-year-old WEVH woman)

80% of WEVH mentioned this in comparison to 60% of non-WEVH women. For both these women success is down to working long and hard. Int20 also cites whom you know too. The emphasis on getting the job done and having to stay at work until late was one of the main reasons Int6 became self-employed. She now works part-time from home. This choice although helps in that she can spend more time with her children also means that she struggles financially. Interestingly Gill (2007) found

that self-employed people in the new media industries main problem was regulating work i.e. ensuring that it flowed and that there were no bottlenecks.

Int6: “Just looking for jobs and finding one and learning a lot of stuff while I was there and. working hard They expect you to work hard, places like this and stay late and get stuff done.” (49-year-old WEVH woman)

8.5. Chapter Summary

The results relating to the third theme of the thesis is presented in this chapter.

When looking at language/ability to articulate women’s position in the contemporary workplace in section 5.3 the question ‘what are women’s career decisions based on?’ showed both sets of women saying quality of life. Both sets of women also gave a range of replies with non-WEVH mentioning passion and confidence levels more and WEVH mentioning more social reasons such as childcare, age and a need for money again showing more of an awareness of gender relations. Both sets of women mentioned barriers that affected women in the workplace. They both talked about sexism but WEVH women also mentioned childcare, always being available for work, age, bargaining power, nationality and the ‘glass ceiling’, again showing a better understanding of the gender technology relationship. Non-WEVH women did however mention erasure of past women’s voices and getting recognition for their work more. When looking at how conflict is dealt with in the workplace more non-WEVH women felt that it was dealt with badly in their workplace. Both sets of women had similar views on what women’s career prospects were based on with what is produced, working all hours and bargaining power being dependent on your skills being mentioned most. WEVH women mentioned social policy and funds generated by self more frequently whereas non-WEVH women mentioned

networking, passion and compromising more. Again, here the non-WEVH focus was on the individual rather gender.

Chapter 9

9. Survey Results: Awareness of Gender Politics/Feminism

9.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the results relating to the fourth theme of this study, awareness of gender politics/feminism. It examines women's career choices and trajectories by looking at the decisions and influences that have shaped them. This theme is addressed by focusing on the following four questions, 'What have been the major influences on your career?', 'How have you achieved this?', 'Is your current position one in which you envisioned after finishing your courses?', 'What have been the barriers?' and 'Where do you see yourself in the future and to what extent do you think you can determine this?'.

Aside from the WEVH being mentioned by all but one woman in the WEVH group as an influence on their career, the main differences appeared to be that the non-WEVH women offered up a more apoliticised account seeing the individual characteristics of the woman as being a greater influential factor on women's careers than WEVH women in that passion, determination, hard work, talent, willing to take risks and the ability to do things differently were mentioned by all of the non-WEVH women whereas only 40% of them mentioned feminism (McRobbie 2004). 60% of WEVH women thought that feminism was an influencing factor and 90% mentioned having attended the WEVH although a high proportion of them (greater than 60%) mentioned the same individual qualities as non-WEVH women (Walker 2004). All of the women in the study felt that having a female led business/organisation was the key to their success (Walker 2004). 40% more non-WEVH women also

mentioned luck and being aware of trends more than WEVH women (McRobbie 2004; Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005a, 2005b; Gill 2007).

When asked if their current position was one that they had envisioned after their course 30% of WEVH women said yes as did 40% of non-WEVH women. Over 50% of both sets of women said that they had set up their own project/business to ensure that their needs were met (Walker 2004). The main difference highlighted here was that non-WEVH women felt that confidence was a major factor in determining their prospects (McRobbie 2004). Interestingly when asked about the barriers to their success 80% of non-WEVH women mentioned patriarchy/culture as the main set back (Wharton 2004; Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005a, 2005b). 30% more WEVH women specifically mentioned finance as limiting although this could be seen as part of patriarchy and culture also (Cockburn 1983 and 1985).

When asked if they had a vision for the future and to what extent they thought they could determine this all but one non-WEVH woman thought that their vision was within their control (McRobbie 2004). 50% less WEVH women felt it was within their control and mentioned ageism and loss of network as contributing factors (Walker 2005).

The fourth set of questions explores the theme of awareness of gender, politics and feminism looking at women's careers and how this affects their trajectories. Question one looks at women's awareness of factors affecting their careers such as legislation, changes in expectation and role models. The second question looks to see if women contextualise their achievements and/ or see them as a result of hard work and/or serendipity. The third question was asked to see if there was a discrepancy between what women thought was achievable when they did their course and what they'd actually achieved and if so what did they think had affected this. Question number

four was posed to try and obtain an insight into how women interpret the barriers they face if indeed they are aware of them and to see if any of them could offer up explanations for why these barriers were being presented now. Question number five explores how women view their future career prospects. I wanted to know to what extent they thought this was within their own personal control and if they thought other external factors came into play.

An open approach to data gathering was taken because a central principle of the research design was to examine women's lived experiences of the workplace. To achieve this it was important that all of their individual experiences were talked rather than limiting their responses. Limiting women's responses would have given a distorted view of what they consider to be important experiences from their point of view. Whilst this approach meant that a large amount of data was captured it also meant that it was done in an unbiased way.

9.1. Career Influences

Women were asked 'what have been the major influences on your career?'

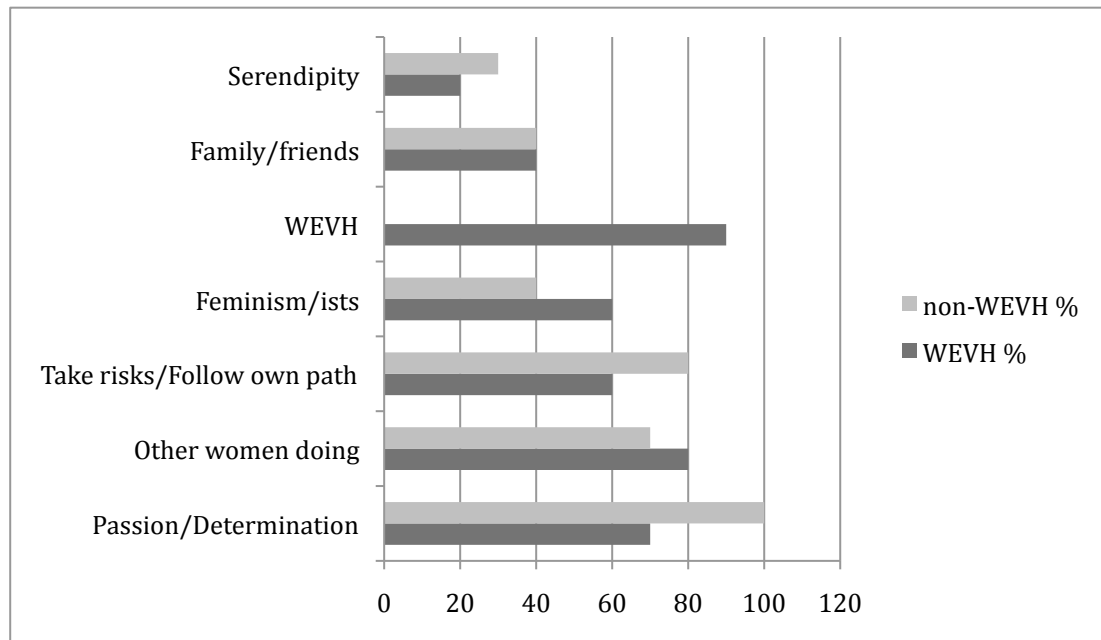
This question generated seven responses from the women. The second column of table 9.13 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 9.13 What have been the major influences on your career?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Passion/determination/hard graft/talent	70	100	85
Women doing	80	70	75
Willing to take risks/do things differently	60	80	70
Feminism/ists	60	40	50
WEVH	90	-	45
Family/friends	40	40	40
Serendipity	20	30	25

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 9.13 are summarised below in table 9.13b with the main difference being that all but one WEVH woman mentioned her training at the WEVH. Again passion and determination were mentioned more by the non-WEVH women but in this question 40% did say that feminism had its role to play and 70% thought that seeing other women doing what they wished to do had an effect on their career decisions. It is often the case that connections between different issues are missed simply due to women not having the space or time to discuss these matters which is another reason why the WEVH was so important with there being too few places for women to come together and talk/network (Richards and Milestone 2000; Walker 2005).

Table 9.13b What have been the major influences on your career?



Both sets of women thought that passion/determination, seeing other women doing and being willing to take risks/doing things differently were major factors here. 60% of WEVH women mentioned feminism, as did 40% of non-WEVH women. Seeing other women doing is so very important otherwise the message given to women is that these occupations are not suitable for women (Wajcman 1991; Cockburn 1983, 1985; Faulkner 2001).

30% more non-WEVH women mentioned passion/determination. For all of these women being passionate about their work as well as determined has been what has shaped their careers. Non-WEVH women's responses to what they thought was a major influence on their career again fell into the liberal feminist bracket (McRobbie 2004; Griffiths and Moore 2006). WEVH women mentioned the WEVH and feminism more and indeed the influences of the WEVH can be very much seen in the career choices and business sets ups of the WEVH women throughout their comments in this survey.

Int3: “I think I'm determined, I can be quite determined and there are quite serendipitous elements to it and I think I've been willing to take a risk; I will take risks. For instance, I would just walk out of my job at the university because it was making me unhappy and everything. I would do that, whereas a lot of people would wouldn't, so I have got that, of walking away from things and in some ways I gained confidence from that. Because even though, like I said to you before with a catastrophic moment, it actually isn't. Well, it is in some ways it's like that thing, if one door closes then it opens new opportunities and I think that has been a really valuable experience for me.” (58-year-old WEVH woman)

One of the things that comes up time and time again with women who refuse to put up with sexism and misogynistic behaviour is that it is they who have to leave the organisation or in the case of a number of women here they set up their own company and work on a very small scale.

10% more WEVH women mentioned women doing as being a factor. Role models are mentioned by 80% WEVH women and 70% non-WEVH women. Doing by example sends out a very clear message to women in that it tells them that it is possible to succeed in that particular area and that it is a safe space for them to be. If it is the case that the woman employed is done so for tokenistic reasons then this will be discovered and any further recruitment will be problematic. This of course is not true for all women and some women will be attracted to an occupation precisely because of its masculine image (Henwood 1996; Hacker 1989). For each of the women in this example their role models were women who were often doing exactly what they wanted to do; the examples given aren't just women doing something like they wanted to do but what they actually wanted to do. I think this point is so very important. (Dale et al 2005: 22) found that the absence of female lecturers and role models added to the isolation of being the only female student. Women were aware that only the very strongest were able to survive and stay the course.

Int1 talks about seeing other women like her doing as being an important influence on her career decision-making. The symbolic importance of seeing women doing comes through in Int1's comment in that she talks about the subliminal message that is given being quite profound in that for her this was the 'biggest' influence.

Int1: "Be more to do with people so I would say role models, so more in terms of actually seeing women doing things, that would probably be the biggest for me, probably on an unconscious level would be Just seeing people like me doing things that I could see myself doing." (47-year-old WEVH woman)

For Int5 seeing other females like her doing the things she wanted to do inspired her to make a career in the music industry. Int5 runs an independent radio station that plays only the music that she likes. For her seeing other women succeeding and remaining independent has been hugely influential on her career. Seeing how some women have had to sacrifice their independent roots has also helped in that it has made Int5 remain loyal to her cause and to do everything in her power to keep the independent music vibe in Manchester and the air-waves very much alive and kicking.

Int5: "Lauren Laverne was a big hero of mine but she's an example of what you have to do to become part of the industry. She was in one of the great bands of the 1990's, hosting her own shows, being really independent and then she sold out and started presenting terrible programmes on television. She was on that travesty the other night, that best rock and roll band where they were discussing the various merits of who was the best drummer-John Bonham and somebody else from the Stones, it was a terrible programme. But watching that sort of thing it makes you think that that is what women have to do to succeed, they have to ignore their roots and I hope that going to change but that was sad, she was a really good role model, she did her own shows and everything. She really had her own tastes and she was in Kenickie and that and you don't get much better than that! I think she was a good role model but then she's done what was right for her own life and her career, kind of, totally changing tack. Then there were people like Marcel van Hoof, I don't know if you've come across her? She's been hosting an independent radio show for 25 years, she's probably the best example, she's making a living out of Djing, club Djing and mixing, remixing other artists work and

doing her radio show, she's done that independently and it's still something she's making a living out of entirely on her own terms and that's been 20 odd years.” (25-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int19 cites the course she was involved with at the WEVH as being her inspiration as well as seeing other women’s work that she respects. Int19 who works for a major gaming company mentions the WEVH as somewhere that has influenced and inspired how she might want to set up other courses. The WEVH was clearly a model of excellence in terms of its teaching methods, policies and practices (Walker 2004).

Int19: “I think education and being involved with courses, including the women's electronic village hall, that's kind of influenced the way you might take something forward. There's also role models that you look and think, I'd like to be like that person, because I really respect their work. I think role models are really important to women.”(43-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int10 also cites the WEVH and the supportive environment she found there as being the major influence on her career.

Int10: “Well, in the New Media sense I think it's the women's EVH, I really do. I wouldn't have gone down this path without that and the support of Tony saying, go on take six months off.”

Interviewer: “Was that anything to do with the support of other women, as in role models?”

Int10: “Definitely, one of having the opportunity to do it after being made redundant for I god knows how many times and that was the first time I'd chosen a path, rather than, as I say just meandering from one job to the other and that, yes, it was definitely a supportive atmosphere and it definitely wouldn't have been the same without the WEVH.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Here Int10 talks about having the support of her partner in taking 6 months out of work and also having the support of other women for the first time in her life. She actually made a conscious decision to attend a course and thinks the WEVH was a major influence on her life journey. Int10 now runs her own new media company with her partner offering the skills that she gained at the WEVH. Ellen and Herman

(2005) point to this issue of women entering IT through non-conventional routes and it's clear from the accounts of the women in this study that they have often just '*fallen into IT*' (Ellen and Herman, cited in Webster 2007: 284).

Int16 remembers a female friend at her old training place and how she wanted to do that woman's job!

Int16: "I had a friend who, a woman friend who worked in a printing co-op, when I was about 18,19 and I just never thought of that, I just wanted to do that job, I just wanted to be, take over her body and do her job. So, that's one, another one is that I watched a programme about Quantel Paintbox, which was one of the very first digital painting things and they had six artists and, who knows one of them could have been David Hockney. So the idea was that they had six artists who had done traditional work and this idea was... Quantel Paintbox was the precursor to Photoshop it was very expensive only thing of it's kind digital imaging package. Each week they had a technician helping them to realise their work digitally and I wanted to be the technician, I didn't want to be the artist, and I wanted to be the technician because they made it happen. Artists have it in their mind but they couldn't...Damian Hirst is boring, because his ideas, he's got a good idea or ish but he's got someone else and he doesn't even credit who's done it and it's so rude. I know it's done in the past but it's so rude because actually the idea is part of it, it's a really good part but the completion of it is part of it, too." (54-year-old WEVH woman)

Int16's comment is a brilliant example of a woman wanting to do exactly what she has seen another woman doing in that she talks about wanting to be that person - 'to take over her body and do her job'!

60% of WEVH women and 80% of non-WEVH women thought taking risks was a factor. This risk taking often took the form of giving up a secure job to follow a less travelled path. Often the previous job would have been given up because the woman's personal politics or way of working didn't fit with the organisation so she was more or less forced to leave or be unhappy in the workplace. There is also evidence that it is necessary to achieve a certain 'critical mass' before occupations

begin to be seen as non-segregated and potentially welcoming. Int17's story is quite different in that she had spent most of her life inspiring others to make changes in their lives and to embrace the things about them that society found difficult. This gave her the confidence to challenge herself and realise that her choice of careers was too influenced by the hopes and aspirations of her parents or what she thought her parents wanted from her.

Int17 talks about how her position as an enabler over the years eventually led her to follow her heart on the journey to become a mountain training leader.

Int7: "It's really weird you should say that because it's kind of like I've not really chosen my career and what's influenced it is what I really believe work should be about and to me work should be about making change and doing things differently. So I like events, like for Pride for example was amazing in terms that I believed in the charitable side of it. The work, when I did it was about taking it from this tiny niche little party, which was all about that weekend to providing the opportunity for people to celebrate Pride however they wanted. So we got people involved who had never ever thought Pride was about them, so we had people flower arranging and took people doing projects with the People's History Museum where we took them to see the Lesbians and Gays support the miners banners and all the Lesbian and Gay memorabilia that they've got in the people's history museum and we did heritage projects and we got older members of the community involved and we got families involved, so for me, my career choices are about how I can do things that enable people to experience new things, to do the things they want to do. So when I was running Drake music project that was. With Drake we were working with people with physical impairments, to enable them to make music. So it was, it was looking at ways they could discover new things about themselves, that they could achieve things that they thought they could never do, that they...and from that create independence, not only that I can play music but their families started looking at them different. So that's part of it, that's been partially hampered a bit by me thinking, what do my family want me to do? Indeed to do things that they think are really good and successful and hence, why looking back at 17 and getting brochures for Mountain Leader Training. Now I'm 39 and I've got the courage to go, actually festival Director at Pride and I can say to my Mum and Dad come and see my big event but actually I don't want that anymore, it doesn't matter." (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

20% more WEVH women said their feminist politics had been an influence on their careers. Int3 talks about her overall character, body size and build having an effect on how men see her and also how this has meant that throughout her life she has done things differently and that is how she arrived at the WEVH. It's interesting that Int3 felt that her intelligence intimidated men having worked and left a University because of the misogyny. For women who do make it into higher managerial positions, questions intent on undermining their position can arise with regards to their sexuality and/or femininity sending a clear message to other women who dare to transgress the hetero-gendered norm (Stepulevage 1997). In a 1950's study the terms 'married' men and 'unmarried' women were used to convey what is 'normal' and who is 'deviant'. In this study the managerial style of the 'unmarried' female managers was criticised by the 'married' male staff [with children - even more normal] for not being 'warm' or 'motherly' (Company study 1950's van Oost 1991, cited in Stepulevage 1997: 31). This sort of undermining although subtle is extremely effective in promoting and maintaining hetero-gendered normality in the workplace.

Int3: "Men find me quite confrontational, I think it was that combination of being big; I'm five ft ten, a brunette and being brainy! So I think that's a bit of a scary combination for lots of guys. So I had this moment of (momentous) inspiration and I get these opportunities to do something and that fell apart in my hands and then I went to women's EVH and that was really inspirational as well and I haven't had anything catastrophic happen to me since then."
(58-year-old WEVH woman)

40% of both groups mentioned family and friends. Int2 mentions ordinary people being quite extraordinary as her influence and Int1 talks about feminism and also her daughters growing up and the sexism she sees them facing as influencing her and reminding her that the fight is not over by a long shot and that very little progress has actually been made.

Int2: “And has inspired me more than any woman who's occupying some really amazingly obvious position in society. I think ordinary people who have overcome adversity are definitely up there. I'm quite into ordinary people being extraordinary.” (53-year-old WEVH woman)

Int1: “A feminist perspective on the feminine has been hugely important to me, absolutely massive. Also I would say I having two daughters, just watching them, the youngest one is nine now and she is beginning to seeing gendered the world is and she is beginning to see how the boys are taken more seriously than them.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

Willis (1991) researched girls and boys computer usage and discovered different patterns of behaviour. In his research boys were most likely to play games and girls more likely to choose structured exercise. These results were presented to teachers at a conference with the teachers surmising that the boys played computer games because they were confident, whereas the girls needed to have instructions because they lacked confidence (cited in Spender 1995). Spender reversed these results and presented them to another teacher's conference. These teachers decided that the boys worked through the programs because they were confident and knew what they were doing, whereas the girls played games because they lacked confidence, weren't serious enough and knew little about computers (Spender 1995).

90% of WEVH women mentioned their study at the WEVH as a major factor in influencing their career. The WEVH's influence on women's lives has been documented throughout this study. It has influenced women in all aspects of their careers including which sector to enter; whether to be self-employed or not and if setting up a company what model to use and which policies and practices to adopt or look out for in other workplaces when searching for employment.

9.2. Career Goals

Women were asked ‘How have you achieved this - how have you managed to get to where you are?’

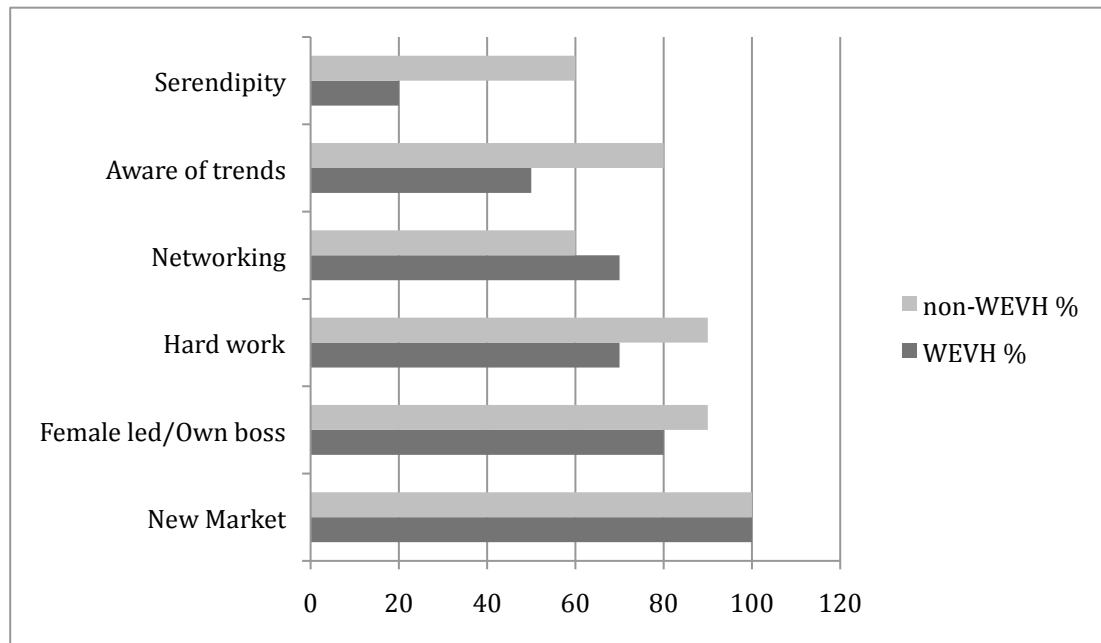
This question generated seven responses from the women. The second column of table 9.14 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 9.14 How have you achieved this - how have you managed to get to where you are?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Female led	100	100	100
Hard work	80	90	85
Networking	70	90	80
Resourceful	70	60	65
Aware of trends	50	80	65
Serendipity	20	60	40
Mentor	20	30	25

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 9.14 are summarised below in table 9.14b show that 30% more non-WEVH women think that serendipity is a factor (Moore et al 2005a) and 30% more put their success down to being aware of trends. This liberal outlook however is also backed by the 100% who mentioned that being a female led business/own boss is also a contributing factor so it would seem that the non-WEVH women have differ with the WEVH women here as they cite all their ‘individual’ factors affecting their success.

Table 9.14b How have you achieved this - how have you managed to get to where you are?



40% more non-WEVH women mentioned luck. Putting ones career successes down to luck has been well documented by Moore et al (1995). This liberal feminist understanding of achievement is also shared by 20% of the WEVH women, which could be partly to do with women being modest about their achievements. All of these women mention an element of serendipity in their working lives combined with a few other qualities too.

Int3: “Yeah, definitely, I think that going to MUWIC and picking up those NM skill at that time was probably a little bit out of the party, you know because there was sort of the halcyon days of the NM boom and everything. I do feel that that was very fortunate to be there, yeah.” (58-year-old WEVH woman)

Int3 does actually mention the timing of her entering the new media industry, which some might see as luck but it could also be down to her being aware of new opportunities, which she has mentioned elsewhere in her interview.

Int13: “A combination of luck, determination and foolishness, my not really knowing what I was getting myself into but doing it, anyway.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int17: “ By what I said before, by just trying things out and by stumbling, blind-eyed into something.” (46-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Both Int13 and In17 are incredibly highly skilled women who are both very successful in their fields. The way in which they describe their success could be partly to do with their sense of humour having always worked in male dominated environments where talking about their skills and feminism in a positive way could have made them stand out even more than they already wanted to. For example in a survey conducted by Henwood (1996) she found that When technically qualified women were socialising outside of college they were often silenced about their ‘technical’ abilities because this questioned the social relations that are actively constructed in our culture. Dominant discourse was therefore largely left unchallenged.

30% more non-WEVH mentioned being aware of trends. This is very much in keeping with Gill (2007) where she found that “New media workers highlighted a number of key characteristics one would need to survive in the field. These included stamina, ability to learn fast, flexibility, creativity, communication skills, and an eye for future trends (Gill 2007: 7). Although Int9 doesn’t mention being aware of trends that is what her business is all about. Their niche is being out there and being at the forefront of development.

Int9: “I think through just through hard work and passion, believing in what you're doing, that it can make a difference and enabling people to make different life choices just because they have come to work with you and also how I’ve got here is again through determination that we can make things work and do things our own way, not to have to do things in other people's ways.”

Interviewer: “Wanting to change and make change?”

Int9: “And *****, our organisation is very much female-led and we've made our niche, we've made our own way of working and it works for us and I think that's been very important that's why I enjoy where I am now. I'm my own boss.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

I find Int9's description of how she uses her knowledge of trends interesting because it is all about making connections and pushing the boundaries for change. Int9's company is female led and she is constantly making the effort to ensure that her company is evolving innovatively both in a technical sense but also in offering good employment practice.

70% of WEVH women and 90% of non-WEVH thought that networking was a factor in influencing their career. Int5 cites networking as being what has influenced her career and in fact brought her to it and sustains it and she maintains it was never planned (Ellen and Herman 2005). Int5 is part of the indie music scene and runs a radio station. For her networking really works because the scene isn't sexist, homophobic, disablist or racist. She finds her community one of the most supportive and has experience the mainstream music networks as well as other type of independent music networks that haven't been quite so welcoming (Richards and Milestone 2000).

Int5: “Then I went to Norwich and I met some people who were running labels, which seemed like something that I could do, although I had no idea how to do it, I gave it a go. That was nearly five years ago now. As I said there has been no plan, everything has been done in a really haphazard way but they seemed to have worked out as I went along. It's that whole girl's cliché of who you know, networking is so incredibly important, because obviously you want people to listen, and so creating a network where that becomes possible is so, so important. Actually that is the main thing, just knowing people. I think it is more so in the media music industry than it is in other industries.” (25-year-old non-WEVH woman)

All of the women from both groups thought that being female led/being own boss had gotten them where they are today. Int1 talks about her tutor and the ways in which she inspired her to get on in her own career. It seems that once women are actually allowed to value the company of other women they gain so much both in terms of their own confidence levels and sharing good practice, resources and advice about suitable work. Women are often discouraged from getting together when space is actually set aside for them (Henwood 1996; Walker 2004) and when we look at the actual space that they have in our cities it is very little in comparison to men (Richards and Milestone 2000; Banks and Milestone 2011).

Int1: “She was very pragmatic and practical, setting things up, so there was that. Clearly, being into technology early meant that there weren't many people who could do the job and without a doubt because I got into a good, proper salaried post after doing part-time work very quickly, really at a level that I was far too inexperienced to do in terms of my teaching experience but my subject specific knowledge, there weren't many people around who had that so those kind of things helped.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

Int1's comment about getting into the technology early i.e. the early/late 90s is quite correct in that whenever there is a shortage of labour women are recruited and there doesn't appear to be a glass ceiling because there are too few women employed. The problem with government initiatives/drives to get more women into areas where they are under-represented is that they seldom challenge the wider issues of our society therefore fail (Henwood 1996).

The phase one report of the EOC's investigation identified '*a correlation between sector-specific skills shortages and under-representation of women in these sectors*' (EOC 2004: 3). The same investigation identified how skills shortages '*...seriously undermine the UK's productivity and competitiveness. They impact on the quality of*

work being produced in the form of delays, increased operating costs and reduced customer services, which often means a loss of business' (EOC 2004: 9). Therefore, occupational segregation is a 'gender issue' and a barrier to addressing skills shortages and increasing the productivity and competitiveness of the country as a whole. The focus is all too often on the needs of industry and not with what is right for the women entering the market (Moore et al 2005a, 2005b).

Hard work was mentioned 80% by WEVH women and 90% by non-WEVH women. Hard work was mentioned by nearly all of the women as being what has influenced their careers. One of the saddest things I found when carrying out this survey is just how hard all of the women in it worked and the sacrifices they have made in order to 'compete' in our patriarchal hetero-normative culture where women are constantly having to march to the male stride (Rees 2002). Gill (2007: 7) also found that *'Respondents reflected on how new media was changing and evolving. Four key differences from the early days of the 1990s were noted: increasing professionalization, greater specialization, decreasing utopianism, and more commercialism.'*

Int7: "Quite a bit of luck, hard work, learning, I make sure I know my stuff and I work hard at it and also partnership. It's one thing that I absolutely advocate, not just in terms of the other people and organisations that you work with but I really believe that you can achieve more together than you can separately, so I'm not somebody who is selfish about my knowledge or contacts I've got, I will share completely because think it comes back and so it's been very much the contacts I've made with organisations, with individuals, some support that I've had from people and also a real sense of belief that I've been given from people, opportunities that I've personally thought, there's no way I could do this but people have given me the chance to do that and I'd say that. Often people believe in me more than I believe in myself." (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

10% more WEVH women mentioned being resourceful. Int2 talks about how being resourcefulness and thrifty have sustained her career. In 2003, women working full-time in Britain earned 82% of the average full-time earnings of men. This means that at 18% there has been little change in the full-time gender pay gap since the mid 1990s. Occupational segregation contributes to the gender pay gap. Men tend to work in occupations where there are high proportions of other men, thus there are higher rates of pay (Olsen and Walby 2004).

Int2: “A lot of it is hard work, a lot of hard work and things like being determined and resourceful and so on. I was brought up to be canny and things like being thrifty and so on are quite useful. So you kind of learn how to live well with not an awful lot sometimes so your values can be different and I think that some people can suffer a lot from not being able to afford certain things so I think creativity is a much bigger thing than just your art practice, curiosity, resilience, being thrifty and resourceful are all part of creativity, really and probably what my work practice is and how I sustain my career.” (53-year-old WEVH woman)

9.3. Career Trajectory Influences

Women were asked ‘is your current position one in which you envisioned after completing your course/courses?’

[THEN] What else do you think has affected your prospects?’

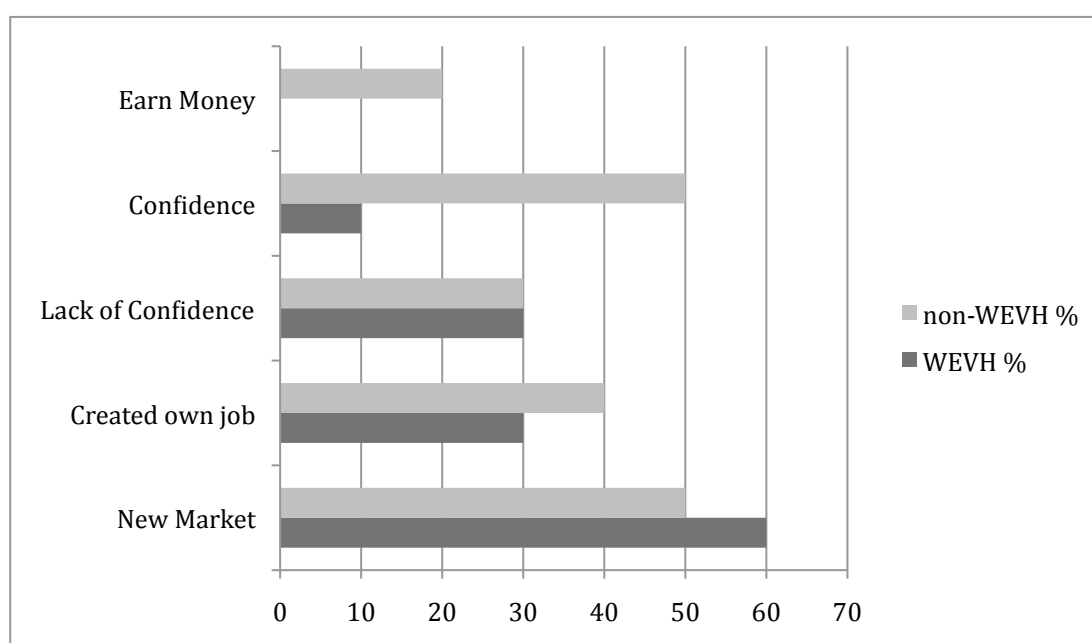
This question generated nine responses from the women. The second column of table 9.15 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 9.15 Is your current position one in which you envisioned after completing your course/courses?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Created own job	60	50	55
Envisaged	30	40	35
Confidence lack/not pushy enough	30	30	30
Confidence	10	50	30
Technology changes	10	10	10
Not encouraged as much as men	10	10	10
Need money	0	20	10
Health issues	0	10	5
Language	10	0	5

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 9.15 are summarised in table 9.15b below with the main difference being that 40% non-WEVH women mentioned confidence which could be a recognition of the power that women get from working in a non-traditional area (Hacker, cited in Henwood, 1996).

Table 9.15b Is your current position one in which you envisioned after completing your course/courses?



40% more non-WEVH women mentioned having confidence in their abilities as being a factor in envisaging where they are today. *‘There was evidence that training in non-traditional areas had increased women’s self esteem and confidence. It became clear that doing what they had always wanted to do had enhanced their confidence and made them more self-assured’* (Dale et al 2005: 13).

For Int12 having confidence in her abilities and not wanting to be controlled by anyone else has ensured her success as a self-employed artist.

Int12 Yeah, it is actually. I knew I would want to work for myself.

M: What are the main reasons, apart from being in control, are there any other reasons?

Int12: Yeah, choice, I suppose, I've got my own choice.

Yeah, I'm sure politics have come into it. A lot of self-belief has come into it and that of not wanting to be under the control of anyone else, particularly.

30% of each group mentioned having a lack of confidence as a factor. ‘One woman, we were told, had left the mainstream engineering course because of the “*stick she got from men.*” Another on a bricklaying course “*just decided it wasn’t what she wanted to do.*” When they received harassment from fellow students, this tended to dent their already shaky confidence (EOC 2005).

Int6: “The stuff I talked about really, with the male thing being different. The confidence, you need a certain kind of confidence and I lacked it, as well. Cause I think if you're not encouraged you have to put yourself forward in a certain sort of way and if you don't do that you won't get noticed.” (49-year-old WEVH woman)

Int6 talks about lack of confidence in relation to gender and how men are treated differently at work. Int6 has worked in the new media industry right from its beginnings and would have been one of the first women to do this type of work. She has mentioned elsewhere in this study that it was all too often male colleagues who

received more training and better treatment than her. This differential treatment has been well documented and affects women even more so because they are the main carers and are more likely to be in part-time work (Walby 2007).

20% more non-WEVH mentioned money as being an influence. In 2003, women working full-time in Britain earned 82% of the average full-time earnings of men. This means that at 18% there has been little change in the full-time gender pay gap since the mid 1990s. Occupational segregation contributes to the gender pay gap. Men tend to work in occupations where there are high proportions of other men, thus there are higher rates of pay (Olsen and Walby 2004). The reality of this is that women can earn more money in jobs that are traditionally considered male.

Over half of both groups of women, 60% WEVH and 50% non-WEVH women created their own jobs. Int14 traces her career back to the WEVH where she first learned how to use a camera. She is now a freelance photographic journalist. *‘Many women enjoyed the responsibility and control of being self-employed or running a small business, and, in addition, spoke of the freedom from harassment which they had encountered on a building site or at a male dominated workplace’* (Walby 2007: 13).

Int4: “Yes, yes, because what happened, when I started this WEVH thing, everyone was using graphics and I was using photography because there was a digital camera, so all my coursework was photography and I was not a photographer then and when I started doing this MA, I became quite confident with photography so always when I want to express myself it's using photography and as a result, I trained myself, I went to photography school in Poland and I got a diploma and I got some exhibitions and now I'm doing a PhD in photography.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

Less than half of each group, 30% WEVH and 40% non-WEVH envisaged being in the position that they currently held. This could be partly to do with the new media industry being an emerging one therefore some of the occupations weren't even on the map ten to fifteen years ago. It could also be that women due to their circumstances i.e. being the main carers often have to be more flexibly minded. It is also the case that whilst some employers are keen to embrace good employment practice others, whilst reasonably keen in principle to employ women, are unwilling to be flexible in work practices to take into account women's childcare requirements, family responsibilities or age (Dale 2005).

Int3 describes what a number of other women's careers have done in that they unfold rather than are planned.

Int3: "The next job I got after that was working on a big digitisation project for Manchester libraries, where they did a huge... digitised loads of cotton archives, so I worked on the website and I actually worked on the content management system but was behind that, wrote a lot of content for the website and everything, so that was how I began to move away from the actual programming, the content back end and move into more different roles. No, I didn't expect to end up where I am now, I didn't know where I was going to end up, actually. One of the things that I think has been really exciting about it is that there is potential in the industry for all of those different roles and you do have to understand how it all works so you do need to have technical knowledge, you don't have to do it but you do have to understand how it all works." (58-year-old WEVH woman)

9.4. Barriers

Women were asked 'what have been the barriers?'

This question generated nine responses from the women. The second column of table 9.16 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both

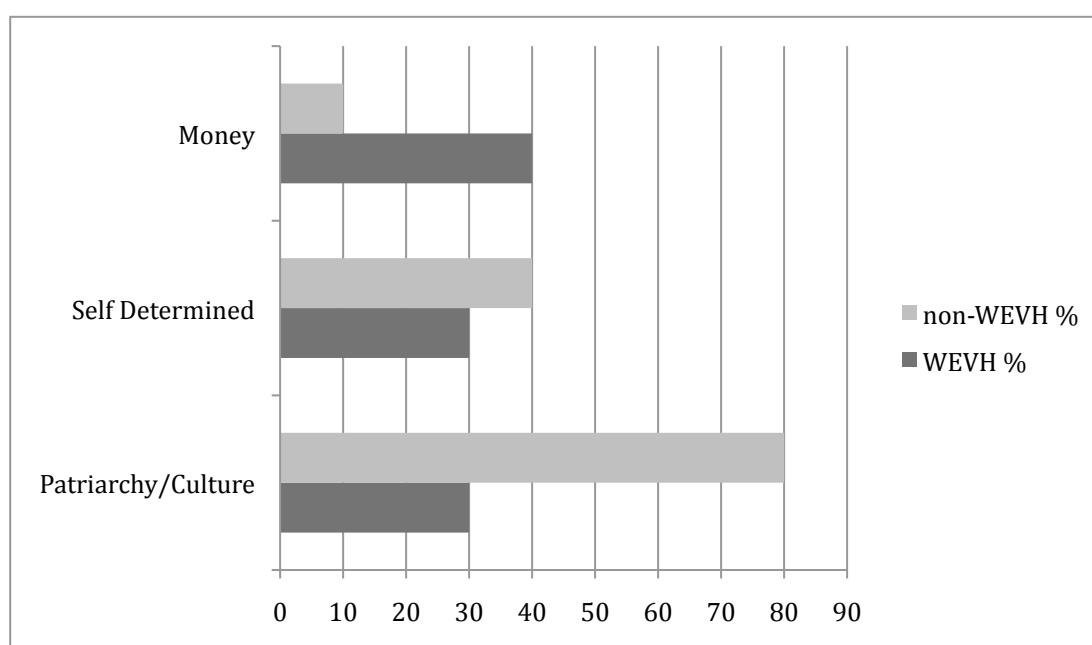
groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 9.16 What have been the barriers?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Patriarchy/culture	30	80	55
Self determined	30	40	35
Money	40	10	25
Lack of resources	20	10	15
Age	20	0	10
None so far	0	10	5
Racism	10	0	5
Class	10	0	5
Capitalism getting in the way	0	10	5

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 9.16 are summarised in table 9.16b below showing that 50% more non-WEVH women mention patriarchy as a barrier to their success whereas 30% more WEVH women mention finance. Both groups of women are aware of the cultural influences of both capitalism and patriarchy placing restrictions on their development (Wajcman 1991).

Table 9.16b What have been the barriers?



Lack of resources, age, racism, class and capitalism were mentioned to a lesser extent by some women although more so by WEVH women. Again, a lack of formal channels for complaint were seen to be difficult or in the case of Int16 having to deal with an institution as a freelancer meant that she was often wondering if it was her politics or the fact that she was visibly from south-Asian decent that was affecting how they were treating her. She could never get to the heart of the matter due to them closing ranks and the discrimination being covert. This coupled with a lack of formal channels for her to appeal through meant that it went unchallenged and unchecked with Int16 feeling there was simply nothing she do.

Int16: “It was a difficult situation as it was never clear whether it was my work, my politics or the colour of my skin that was the issue and they just wouldn’t engage in any dialogue”.

50% more non-WEVH women mentioned patriarchy/culture as a barrier here. This is interesting because it does appear at odds with some of the other comments of the non-WEVH group as a whole and also one would have expected this difference to be weighted more so towards the WEVH group given their previous comments. WEVH women have chosen to mention individual barriers more but it’s still interesting that the non-WEVH women mention culture/patriarchy specifically.

Int7 describes how the culture of patriarchy has made it difficult to express herself in the workplace. She finds that when she expresses her emotions she is patronised and not taken seriously. This attitude men expecting women to fall in with a particular way of behaving is unacceptable because they are simply not men (Rees 2002).

Int7: “Certain people, I’ve come across quite a bit of blame in the workplace, normally from men and that’s been quite hard because I think there is a perception of being a woman, how you would handle that. For example,

when I get angry, I get emotional so I often get from men, come on, don't get emotional and the notion of, poor girl she doesn't know what she's doing, so it's sometimes that. Often from men who are really out of their depth so they have to make it look like you're the one who is really out of your depth. Barriers, in terms of my own ability to think I can do it but, no I think other than that I've been really lucky.” (39-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int20 talks about how the female half of an artistic partnership can often ‘disappear’ with the male half continuing and reaping the benefits of the previous partnership.

Interestingly Holmes et al (2007) found that 29 per cent of people would use career breaks if their employers offered them. A higher proportion (40 per cent) would use paid sabbaticals if they were offered. Clearly these figures show that sabbaticals enhance one’s career whereas career breaks simply do not.

Int20: “They're approached differently, maybe. I know some women who did very well, they got their name out there because they worked in collaboration with men, as a partnership, in some ways and that worked until the partnership disappeared and then it's only the man that seems to be continuing on that project, very rarely women.” (41-year-old non-WEVH woman)

30% more WEVH women mentioned money. Lack of resources, age, racism, class and capitalism were also mentioned by some women although more so by WEVH women. Both Int2 and Int16 talk about how money has been a barrier. For Int16 it means that she has fewer choices when planning what to do with her in future. The size of the gender pay gap is linked to the size of the overall income spread (Blau and Kahn 1996). If overall inequality were to diminish, this is likely to contribute to a reduction in the gender pay gap, since female workers are disproportionately found among lower income earners. It is also the case that if women’s potential contribution to the employment market is held back then productivity suffers. There is evidence that even where women and men perform the same job in the same sector, women receive significantly lower pay (Thewlis et al 2004). This gender

productivity gap contributes to the lesser productivity of the UK economy as compared with some of its competitors (Walby 2007).

Int16: “Performance skills, I’m not going to go back into design production, I’m too old, it’s a young...I mean that thing about working over hours and dropping everything for the deadline. I mean, I choose to do it in my work but if I’ve got a deadline, I’ve got that thing in me from production, which is if it needs to be out, I’ll stay late and do it but if someone told me that I had to then I wouldn’t, I’d do it myself. So, what, I might, I mean I’m not going to move to another city but I’d probably been trying to get the same sort of work, potentially I might do something where I started something up on my own but you have to have a lot of luck and it’s the wrong sort of environment for that. If I was comfortably off I might go down to fewer days and potter about, whatever and it would be great but I think that I rely on my wages too much for that and similarly, one of the things on offer at work is that we, in theory could take unpaid sabbatical in 6 months to 2 years. In our job, I don’t think we could because.” (54-year-old WEVH woman)

9.5. The Future

Women were asked “where do you see yourself in the future?

[THEN] Do you believe you can determine this?’

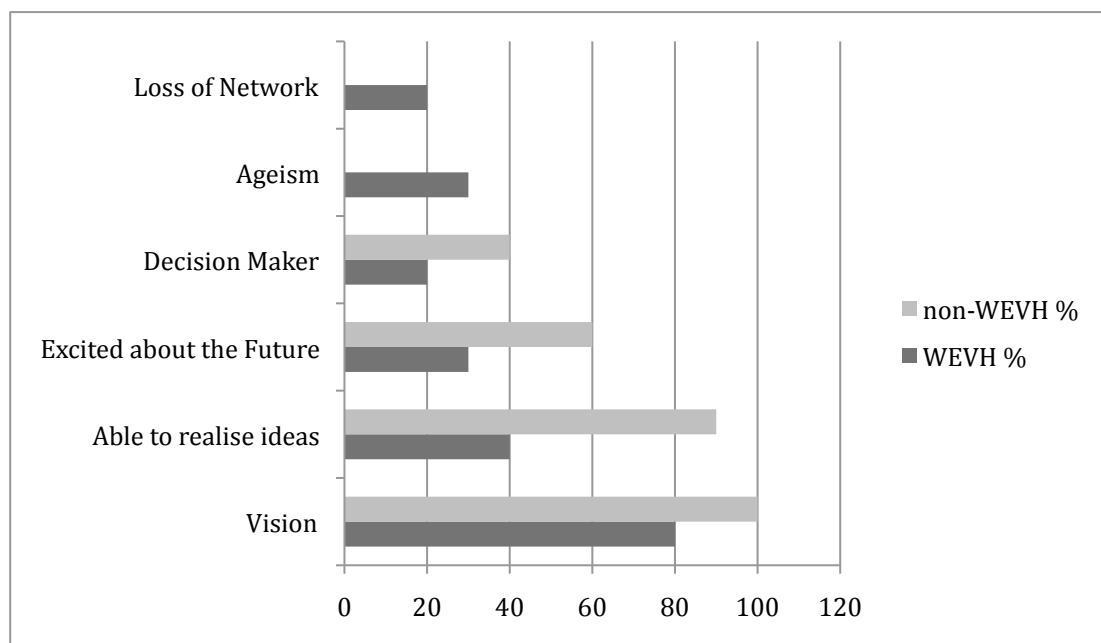
This question generated eight responses from the women. The second column of table 9.17 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 9.17 Where do you see yourself in the future?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Has vision	80	100	20
Able to realise ideas/in control	40	90	65
Excited about what future may bring	30	60	45
Doing same thing	20	30	25
Use of tech not fitting with politics	10	20	15
Travel	20	10	15
Ageism	30	0	15
Loss of network	20	0	10

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 9.17 are summarised in table 9.17b below with 50% more non-WEVH women believing that they can make their vision for the future happen but this could also be linked to their desire to be a decision maker and the fact that 20% more of them have a vision. 30% more are excited by their future with 30% more of the WEVH women being concerned about ageism and being an older group this could account for this very direct concern. The differences in this question are more difficult to tease out but do show that on the whole non-WEVH women feel that they have more control over their future working lives.

Table 9.17b Where do you see yourself in the future?



50% more non-WEVH women thought that it was in their power to make their vision happen. This is hardly surprising as non-WEVH women also see their future as being influenced by luck/serendipity whereas a number of the WEVH women were

seriously worried about whether they would actually remain in work due to policy changes and cut-backs. When asked about their vision for the future Int8 thought that she could indeed make her dreams come true based on the fact that she had gotten to where she was now on her own steam. Since this interview Int8 has indeed moved to Edinburgh and is living near to the sea. Int8's liberal philosophy clearly works for her but it can be seen from her remarks that she does feel as if she has 'to grab' which in some ways is acknowledging that whatever she wants is not exactly freely given.

Int8: "I think it's a lot of um... I have an idea of where I want to be, I want to be working three or four days a week doing the whole music side and the IT side but I also want to have that work/life balance, like I want to live by the sea and I want Holly to live forever! But..."

Interviewer: "Do you think you can make things happen?"

Int8: "Definitely, I've made where I am today, I've made that happen myself, absolutely. I'm a really positive person and I believe that if there's something negative out there there's got to be a positive the other side, so go and grab it and look for that. So make your opportunities and go and grab them with both hands and if they don't work out it's absolutely fine, you've still given it a go so..."

Interviewer: "It's about your personal philosophy?"

Int8: "It's always stood me in good stead, I am a very positive go-getter sort of person and also I don't ram that down peoples throats, I know that some people can find that quite irritating but it really has, my own self drive has brought me to where it has today and it's still going strong." (37-year-old WEVH woman)

30% more non-WEVH women were also excited about the future. Int9 had quite detailed plans about her future and like a lot of other women living by the sea was one of the things that excited them! Continuing with studying and working on her artwork was also very important. Interestingly Int9 went from talking about doing a PhD in her current area to not wanting to have anything to do with IT if she had the choice!

Int9: "My plan is now to finish my MA which will be done in December, then I'm looking at doing a PhD myself, so I've just seen one at Bradford but I think I'm too early for that. So, I'd like to maybe do a bit more research

around the kind of stuff that I'm doing because there isn't much documentation or research in that area, around engaging with communities, digital participation and all that I've learnt over the past ten years needs to be written down somewhere and researched up a bit more.....I don't want to have anything to do with technology, I want to be a Reiki healer and sit in the house by the sea. So that's what I'm feeling at the moment, I don't know, maybe I could do all of them!” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

All of the non-WEVH women questioned had a vision, as did 80% of WEVH women. A lot of women talked about their visions in quite a loose way and were happy for that to be. This flexibility when looking at their careers was very common with all the women. It's difficult to say why, whether it's because they are women and have had to be flexible with having children etc or whether it's down to them being artists so therefore open minded and willing to try new things or perhaps a combination of these two factors. Int1's comments are very interesting as she has been involved with new media since the very beginning when the system was viewed by many feminists and the political left as being able to deliver the promise of more democracy and better working conditions etc. The interests of the multi-nationals can be seen more clearly now and this has resulted in women like Int1 feeling quite deluded and in need of finding a different path.

Int1: “So even though I do say I acknowledge that it's the utopian version, was just that, the utopian version, obviously I was more influenced by it than I realised at the time, along with many people I think who were working in that area. So, now it feels quite stark, in many ways and it's really thinking what are the strategies, as a human, as an academic, as an artist, as a feminist and you can only do what you can do at the time and keep doing it and something else might make itself, become evident or become clearer.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

30% more WEVH women mentioned ageism. Gill (2007) also found that a small number of people mentioned the under-representation of older people in her survey

although on the whole her participants felt that it was a very egalitarian sector. Int6 talks about ageism and how it makes her feel in the office environment. The changes to her body and mind and how those changes are seen as negative rather than positive. She also cites that employing younger people is more cost effective in that they are paid less money and are willing to work longer hours.

Int6: "Don't know where I see myself really, because I haven't got anything stable, like a pension or any thing and I think that this kind of work, they'll just consider me too old, at some point. I don't know, no, I don't know really."

Interviewer: "Do you think there will be an age where that will come into it; even if you keep up with the packages or the training?"

Int6: "Yeah, I do because I think the younger ones are really fast and there is a certain amount of losing it, getting a bit dippy or just not remembering things or not being as quick. What I do, I do really well but when I'm working with some 20 something year old and he's just like (drums fingers) dead, dead fast, you know and I think I'll probably never be that fast really, I was probably never that fast."

Interviewer: "What about your experience, does that count?"

Int6: "It does, it obviously does but what will win out in the end is being able to do stuff so fast and also they're willing to stay late and they're willing to have low wages cause they're younger." (49-year-old WEVH woman)

20% more WEVH women mentioned loss of network. Int3 talks about how not being in the loop can leave you vulnerable when your only network is the one that you are employed in and also as an older woman she does feel that losing her network has put her in a much more vulnerable position. The recruitment process adopted by male dominated industries tends to be informal and not follow established procedures, with many vacancies being filled by word of mouth. This process disadvantages women who do not have established, informal networks in the same way as men. Jobcentre Plus provides limited information on vacancies, and, with the exception of certain specialist centres, are not aware of the possibilities (One London 2004; Gill 2007; Banks and Milestone 2011). Since I last interviewed her I have

found out that she was made redundant at very short notice and is still looking for work.

Int3: "I don't know, I have to admit, I really don't know. I wish I hadn't found myself... my network has closed down because at one point I was working with several other people but since I've been working with substance, pretty much continuously, all my other little things have withered on the vine, all my other little projects so I've left myself vulnerable really, with this company." (58-year-old WEVH woman)

9.6. Chapter Summary

The results relating to the fourth theme of the thesis are presented in this chapter.

In theme four women's awareness of gender politics/feminism was explored. Again, the WEVH women responses showed more of an understanding of the dominant gender relations at play. Both groups' replies were very similar with non-WEVH women mentioning passion more and WEVH feminism/ists more. When asked how they had achieved their work goals non-WEVH women mentioned serendipity and being aware of trends more. When looking at their current position and whether this had been envisioned more non-WEVH put this down to confidence. On looking at the barriers that affect women's career decisions more non-WEVH mentioned patriarchy and culture and being self determined whereas WEVH mentioned money. When women were asked where they saw themselves in the future and to what extent they thought they could determine this more non-WEVH thought this to be the case whereas WEVH mentioned ageism and loss of network as affecting this although most of them had a vision.

Chapter 10

10. Survey Results: Networks

10.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the results relating to the fifth theme, women's experience of networks and explores their function in women's working lives. This theme is addressed by focusing on the following three questions, 'Do you use networks?', 'Do you have face-to-face meetings outside of work?' and 'How do you think networking affects you?'.

All of the women interviewed in the study mentioned using networks. Everyone mentioned the social networking site Facebook as well as more specialised art and music networks. This question only flagged up a 10% difference between the groups with 10% more non-WEVH saying they felt supported through on-line networking (Walker 2004). Several women from both groups mentioned that on some of the more specialised art/music/work networks men tended to dominate but felt that women found a way around this by supporting each other on the threads or via private messaging (Turkle 1988, 1995). All of the women were keen to state that face to face meetings were much needed and in a lot of cases these types of meetings were what brought repeat business because people still liked to see the face behind the email. Face to face meetings were also very popular because there was less scope for misunderstandings something that can happen easily with emails (Walker 2004). Almost all of both groups of women mentioned that the old boys network was still very much alive and functioning to serve the interests of men and that women's

careers were affected by this (Cockburn 1983, 1985; Walker 2004; Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005a, 2005b; Richards and Milestone 2000; Banks and Milestone 2010). Accessibility of meetings showed a slight difference between the groups with 20% more non-WEVH women mentioning that meetings were accessible to them. In general this accessibility came down to women organizing the meetings to suit their own schedules. However these meetings often continued afterwards with women being unable to go onto the pub due to childcare issues (Walker 2005; Liff and Ward 2001; Finch and Groves 1983). All of the women talked about the importance of networking to ensure their inclusion in their working lives with only 10% from each group not mentioning career opportunities (Walker 2004; Tharenou 1999; Liff and Ward 2001). In terms of support 20% more non-WEVH women felt that this had an affect on their confidence levels and coping mechanisms at work. In the main over 70% of both groups mentioned that they felt supported due to the various networking options that were available to them and that this had a direct affect on their relationships and coping mechanisms at work (Faulkner 2000; Gatrell 2005; Morrison and Milliken 2003; Piderit and Ashworth 2003).

This final set of questions relates to networks - types of networks, their role and function and whose networks they are. The first question looks at what types of networks women are using and what they are using them for. I posed this question to try and find out if electronic networking is making a difference to women's lives and in what way. The second question was aimed at encouraging women to talk about their experiences of work meetings and whether or not they felt included and why this was so. Question number three explores the affect networking has on women in terms of their sense of self-confidence levels in relation to how excluded or included they feel in the workplace.

An open approach to data gathering was taken because a central principle of the research design was to examine women's lived experiences of the workplace. To achieve this it was important that all of their individual experiences were talked rather than limiting their responses. Limiting women's responses would have given a distorted view of what they consider to be important experiences from their point of view. Whilst this approach meant that a large amount of data was captured it also meant that it was done in an unbiased way.

10.1. On-line Networks

Women were asked ' Do you use networks?

[THEN] What type of networks are women using and what do you use them for?'

This question generated four responses from the women. The second column of table 10.18 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

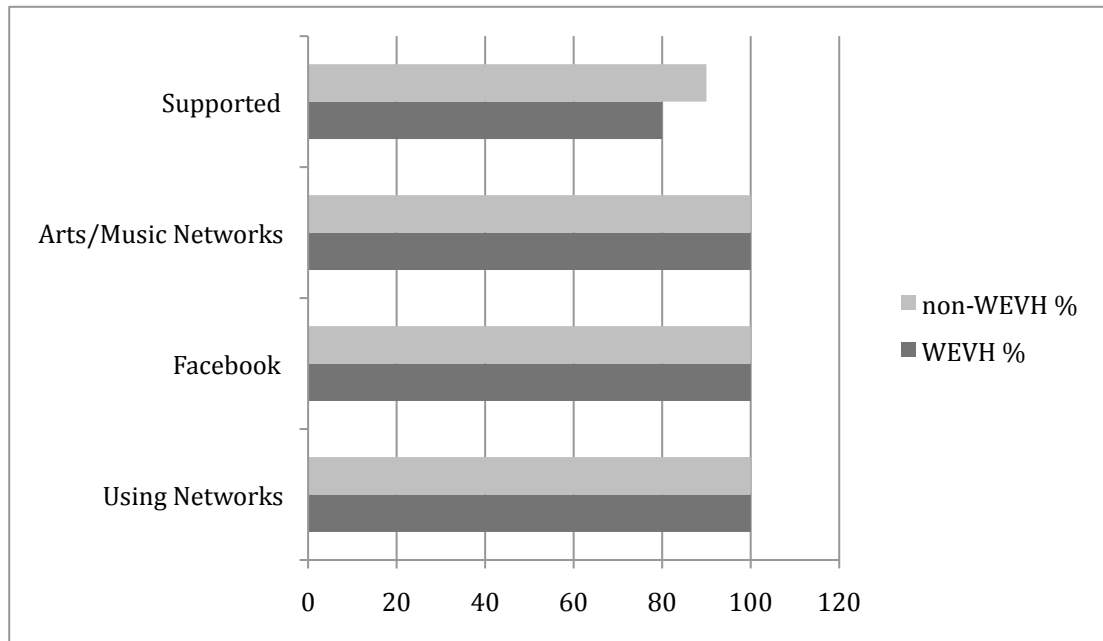
Table 10.18 Do you use networks?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Using networks	100	100	100
FB	100	100	100
Arts/Music networks	100	100	100
Supported	80	90	85

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 10.18 are summarised in table 10.18b below showing negligible difference

between the two groups. All of the women from both groups are using networks both for work and socially with only 10% of non-WEVH women feeling that they were supported more.

Table 10.18b Do you use networks?



All of the women were using networks. Women are using networks for a variety of reasons. Some social, some to ensure a work presence and others to actively network for work reasons. Int9 cites the informal way in which her company recruits people not so uncommon for even larger companies which one would expect to be using proper methods for recruitment. Here is the vice president of Sun Microsystems:

'only 2% of the jobs we fill are from resumes. Most of the jobs in our company are filled by referrals from other employees' (cited in Batt et al 2000: 30).

Int19: "No, it doesn't make any difference at all but it does make a difference to how people would work with us. Where it does make a difference is that when we do or have a certain position, I can say I know someone and that person is always surprised that we women do or have that network...where the men more readily know each other, even online, absolutely." (41-year-old non-WEVH woman)

All of the women mentioned the social network Facebook. Int8 talks about how women are more open to networking in a supporting/sharing way than men and how if you're willing to give out then you will be rewarded with the returns. This sharing of information she thinks is more common for women. Int8 was also someone who stated that she had gotten to where she was in her career off her own back when clearly there is lots of supporting women in her life that she wants to mention (Walker 2005).

Int8: "Yes, I do use networks, I use online networks, not so much offline now but I will do when I move to Edinburgh an important part of it. Online forums like Linked-In and Facebook and Twitter and they're the three main ones really."

Interviewer: "And are women networking on these?"

Int8: "Yes, definitely. Women are definitely networking especially on Twitter on the Women in Technology Network and Women in Rural networks. They all talk to each other, there are many women in Technology networks and they all talk to each other or they're looking for a speaker and the all talk to each other or the bounce ideas of each other. I went to 'a women in technology' conference last year, it was a free conference, which was great and anybody is invited and there was a whole range of speakers. The feedback afterwards was absolutely phenomenal, when I was there, the speakers were fantastic and the networking opportunities were fantastic. I got talking to a woman, actually I went to have a sit in the park opposite for lunch and she was at the conference as well. I was talking about what I was doing and she was talking, she actually came from a finance background and set up her own consultancy business talking to women about different types of technology and how it could help their business or project or whatever...'

All of the women mentioned using arts/music networks. Both women here talk about using a variety of arts/music networks for both social and work purposes. Some women did mention that the more specialist networks could be dominated by men and that the women on them had to find ways of working around that e.g. private messaging or just starting other threads/pages. It has also been said that in the art world men will dominate the more technical threads and leave the others to the women.

Int14: “I like artist's ones and social networking and then sort of like New Media, I'm like using Northern Digital, those sort of things. The Northern Digital is like they have a meet-up, a physical meet-up and the social networking is to communicate with my friends when I'm stuck at home working and to publicise my work.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

There was only one small difference in that 80% of WEVH women felt supported whereas 90% of non-WEVH women felt supported. Networking with other women clearly provides a huge source of support with nearly all of the women mentioning it. Int1 raises an interesting point in that because the support is informal and doesn't seem particularly politically explicit it can feel different to the support of feminism in the '70s and '80s but in fact it does the same work. All of the women talk about getting together with other women here in quite an ad-hoc way but their networks are very functioning and fulfill their role (Dyson 2003; Walker 2004).

Int1: “There is an informal network but a very, very strong network of professional support. I wouldn't ever really have thought I'm in that, it's not really an 'in or out' type of thing but I feel part of but I wouldn't say... when you described your question just then, it put me in mind of things that I've read about how women use different kinds of technology in the seventies and the eighties but I've never experienced it as it was written because it sounds very organised and very consciously done and what I experienced is definitely there but it doesn't have a name and it doesn't have particular groove and it doesn't have a particular explicit political agenda but nonetheless it is there and it does work.” (47-year-old WEVH woman)

10.2. Accessibility

Women were asked ‘Do you have face-to-face meetings outside of work?’

[THEN] Are these accessible?’

This question generated three responses from the women. The second column of table 10.19 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning

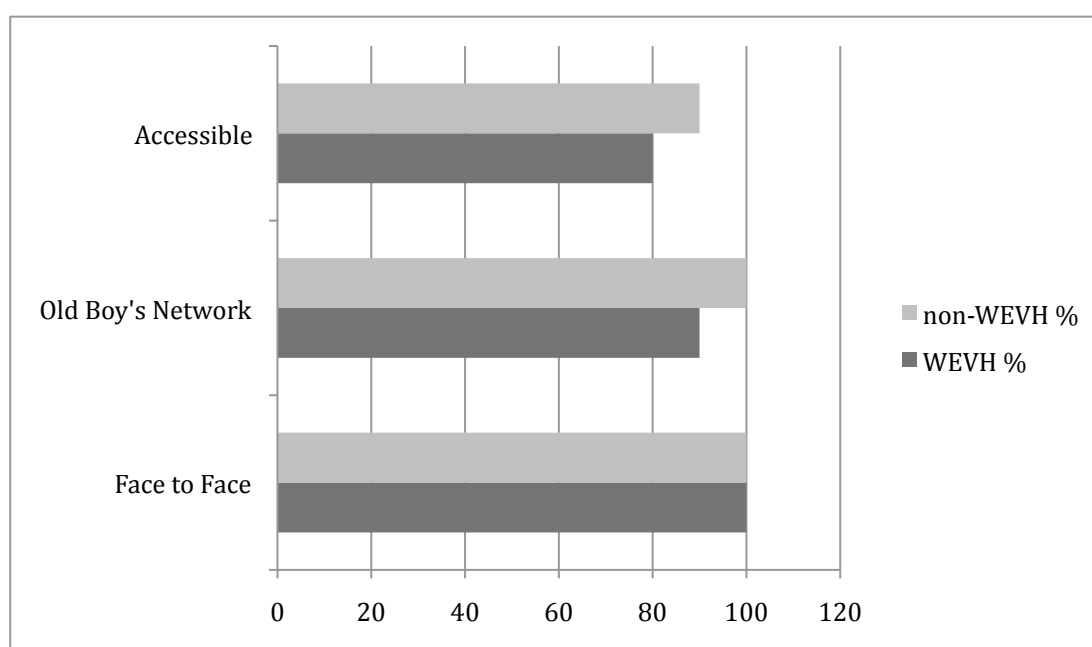
the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 10.19 Do you have face-to-face meetings outside of work?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Face to face	100	100	100
Old boy's network	90	100	95
Accessible	80	90	85

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 10.19 are summarised in table 10.19b below and show very little difference between the groups. All but one woman from the WEVH group cites being aware of the 'old boys network' and 10%, are non-WEVH women felt that their face-to-face meetings were accessible. This could be due to the non-WEVH group having less childcare responsibilities, being younger and fewer having partners therefore able to be more flexible.

Table 10.19b Do you have face-to-face meetings outside of work?



All of the women said that they did face to face networking. The women here talked about the benefits of face to face networking even if it was just an occasional thing in that it helped people put a face to the name and any misunderstandings could be ironed out more easily. Int8 mentioned that her meetings were mainly with men and put this down to the business community being dominated by men and also to men having those perks as part of their job whereas women were often tied to the office. Self-employment is a disproportionately male practice. In 2005 18 percent of male workers were self-employed as compared with 7 per cent of women (Walby 2006). Int5 talks about how the indie music scene is women friendly and that the meetings that they have are attended by equal numbers of men and women.

Int5: “Well, because they're generally small meetings that are set up with a group of people who know each other that have decided to do something, we know equal numbers of boys and girls who are involved with music that the generally tend to be mixed, yeah. We know a lot of people in Manchester who put on gigs and club nights and they are pretty much half and half men and women, so meetings that revolve around festivals in Manchester will tend to be half and half, within our circle. I can't answer for other scenes; other scenes tend to be problematic. I know the local metal scene tends to be very male dominated but I'm not involved in that so I can't speak,” (25-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int8: “A lot of my meetings now are face-to-face. Women and men are doing it but it's more male, I still think the business community is quite male dominated, I believe it is because of family and commitment, it's the old saying the man goes out to work and the woman stays at home and looks after the children, I think that's my take on it, It's like when I used to go to the university external meetings and it would still be very male dominated and I think that's perhaps they were given the higher positions and the women stayed behind doing the clerical jobs and the admin jobs, whereas the guys were given the more outward-facing jobs, so yeah, it was still unbalanced there, I say.” (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Only 10% of WEVH women didn't mention the old boy's network. All of the non-

WEVH women mentioned the old-boys network. The old boys network comes up time and time again and the women here show that it is alive and functioning in different ways (Moore et al 2005a, 2005b; Richards and Milestone 2000; Walker 2005; Banks and Milestone 2011). Informal networks in a work situation, especially an area that is male-dominated results in women being unable to compete in the same way as work is passed between friends and colleagues (One London 2004; Christopherson et al 1999; Richards and Milestone 2000; Banks and Milestone 2011). Int1 talks about it being present in the on-line world whereas Int6 describes the going down the pub at lunchtime culture (Bradley et al 2007). Int19 talks about how it functions in a male dominated office. All of these accounts show that it would seem that little progress has actually been made and how dominant culture norms influence our working environment. At our current rate of progress it will take another 20 years to achieve equality in Civil Service top management; another 40 years to achieve an equal number of senior women in the judiciary; another 60 years to achieve an equal number of female directors of FTSE 100 companies and up to 200 years - another 40 elections - to achieve an equal number of women in Parliament.

Int1: "They are genuine professional networks in that, right from the early beginning of the online networks around net art which...I wasn't there at the beginning, right at the beginning at the mid-nineties, the late nineties. And so, lots of different ways, the way they work formally and informally so that they're putting up ideas, it's different now, now, I would put up. I'm an invited guest on one of the lists for this month of May and June so it's putting up ideas, it's like a real time online journal, in a way. Well, you're either ignored, that's the most common thing, in my experience. You'll contribute something and it's just not taken up, so even eliciting any response. So shouted out is not really quite accurate but you're not- but it feels like that even though it's silent." (47-year-old WEVH woman)

I think it is interesting that Int1 feels that she is being shouted at on-line.

Communicating at a distance does have its benefits but being flamed or ignored are

effective ways of excluding women from on-line interaction and can still make them feel bullied by men (Walker 2005).

Int6: "When I first worked in Macclesfield, they would literally go to the pub every lunchtime and they'd drink pints, they drink pints! I've seen them, because they've only got 5 minutes to go drinking a pint because that's all they've got and then they've got to go back to work. And that's like, that's acceptable. They seem to be able to function but they don't do it as much now because some rules come in about not drinking and not bring intoxicated on the premises. It's crazy, they're crazy?" (49-year-old WEVH woman)

Int6's account of how the old boys' network functions at her workplace is really quite alarming but not that uncommon and is something that needs addressing not just from a gender angle as drinking alcohol isn't part of everyone's social culture and can serve to alienate people (Bradley et al 2007).

Int19: "Ok, I think the old boys network is still going and is very strong, I do believe that there are individuals within that who know that the contribution of all the individuals within their team is vital in that and would make sure that they collect this, for instance, my project, I only talk to one boss, but he has a boss, I never talk to the boss, my boss talks to the boss about what I do and rightly so, because if I did it, it wouldn't come out the right way...but that's my barrier because I don't do the sale talk that he needs.. Elevated pitch, need to do it in 2 minutes flat, sell it and so he goes, 'yeah, yeah, what next?' I would take half an hour to do it...It would be more funnier but that's not what my job is, to be funny!" (41-year-old non-WEVH woman)

Int19's comment starts with her saying that the old boys' network is still going and is very strong but then she puts her manager's attitude down to the fact that she isn't capable of presenting the information that he needs in the correct way rather than seeing that he could in fact be sexist and wants to just deal with other men (E.O.C. 2007).

90% of non-WEVH women thought that face-to-face meetings were accessible whereas in comparison only 80% of WEVH women did. Int3 talks about how the face to face meetings she has with her boss where he just tells her what's going to happen and there is no discussion unlike her meetings with a groups of women that she is working with on a joint project. It would appear that even when meetings are accessible in a time sense whether women's voices are hear is another matter.

Int3 "So it was very consensual, which is very different from the ***** experience and the guys are really nice, the boys are. I do my face-to-face meetings with my project manager and he is just like, "this is what we're doing and I want you to do x, y and z and ok, cheers". So, there's not thing of bringing the whole team together and going through the process like *****." (58-year-old WEVH woman)

For Int9 the face-to-face meetings are setup to be accessible for all but women tend to go home afterwards whereas the men stay on to discuss matters further. Int9 schedules the meetings for in office hours. It's not possible to stop people from staying on to have discussions or to go down the pub etc afterwards. What this means is that regardless of how the workplace organises meetings so that women with dependants can attend, men simply do not have the same responsibilities and can continue outside of work time because our culture as a society allows this. In order for change to be effective it must happen at all levels the symbolic, the structural and individual (Adam and Wyer 1999-2000).

Int9: "We do a lot of face-to-face meetings for Let's Go Global, but these are usually accessible because they are in the day and within our kind of work pattern but as I talked a bout before, what can happen after meetings is that a lot of the women go home and the men stay..." (46-year-old WEVH woman)

10.3. Networking Women

Women were asked 'How do you think networking affects you?'

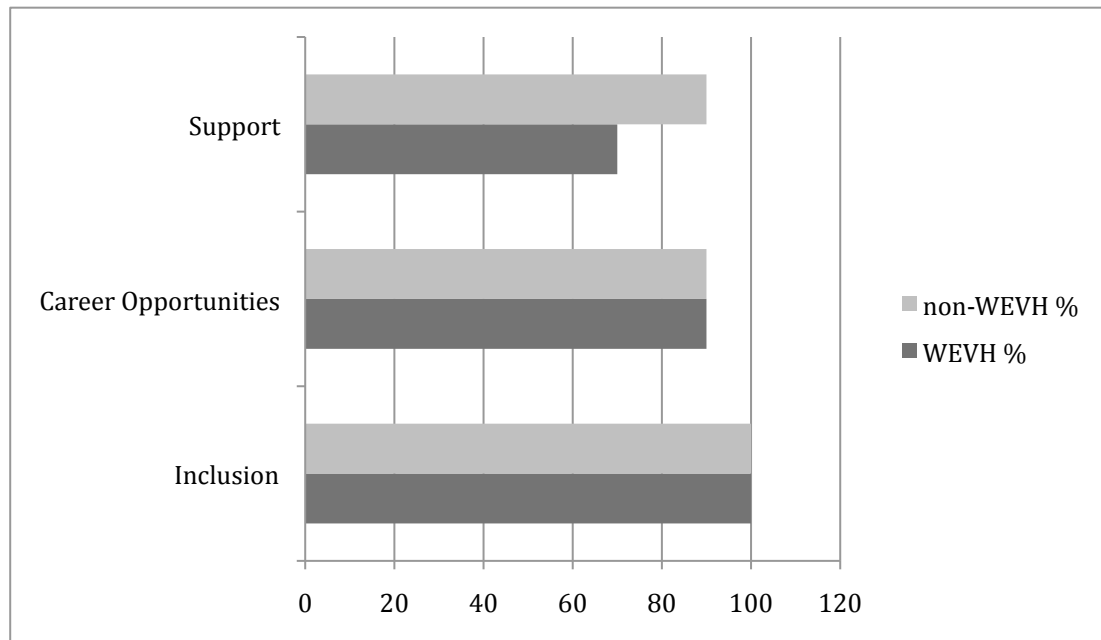
This question generated three responses from the women. The second column of table 10.20 shows the percentage of WEVH women mentioning the responses listed in column one. Column two shows the percentage of non-WEVH women mentioning the responses in column one and column three shows the overall percentage for both groups of women. The responses were ranked (column 3) in terms of the total number of citations given by both sets of women.

Table 10.20 How do you think networking affects you?

Topic focus category	% Of WEVH	% Of non WEVH	% Of all women
Inclusion	100	100	100
Career opportunities	90	90	90
Support	70	90	80

The differences from comparing results from WEVH and non-WEVH women from table 10.20 are summarised in table 10.20b below and show very little difference between the two groups. The non-WEVH women's group experienced more support in terms of receiving work through word of mouth. Again this could be down to the other group being older, in relationships and having children so therefore not able to network quite so much in this way (Richards and Milestone 2000).

Table 10.20b How do you think networking affects you?



All of the women said that networking made them feel more included in their working lives. By this I also mean connected more to their working lives in a physical sense in the way that face-to-face meetings enable that sense of connectedness and understanding. New media has also enabled women to connect because of the relatively low cost and lack of hierarchy Walker (2004). Int10 brings up a very interesting point in that like some other women in this study she has found that communicating at a distance has in some ways made her feel less confident because she has gotten out of the habit of meeting up with people. This feeling is all too common as is that of isolation with women especially those who have had to stay at home and work because they can't afford a studio outside of the home (Gill 2002, 2007).

Int10 talks about how it is easy to get out of the habit of meeting up with people and thinks that it is a good thing especially for her confidence levels.

Int10: "It is something I find quite difficult; I think because I don't have to do it very often, I do get out of the habit of doing it. I find I get quite anxious before meetings and I find myself thinking, I don't even have to do things we could do this by email or over the phone. It's quite a negative feeling you

know, because I do get out of the habit, even making phone calls it's taken away a lot of that confidence, you know, you used to have to go and talk to people and make phone calls and it's all been taken away by email because it has affected my confidence, personally. I'm fine when I get there but you know, there's calls I have to make and I put off making them and I do feel bad about that, texting emailing, I do think it's eroding our ability for face-to-face contact.” (46-year-old WEVH woman)

90% of each group thought that it was necessary for their career opportunities.

Networking is essential for women's career opportunities and they support each other well. There are clearly gender issues and both groups of women have mentioned not being to take full advantage of the networking opportunities on offer.

The non-WEVH group has been slightly less critical of this and appears to have more support from their work colleagues whereas the WEVH women mention not being able to take part in meetings that can continue after work. Both groups of women recognised that there were wider issues although it's clear that all of the women in the study felt very supported by other women (hooks 1994, 2000; Walker 2005).

Despite the recognition and support that women with children have at work discrimination continues because of its existence outside of the workplace and therefore if real and lasting change is going to come then these issues must be challenged at all levels in our society (Henwood 1999, 2000). The gender gap in employment as a direct result of the impact of parenthood is the highest in the EU, which suggests that there is a real need for sufficient and affordable childcare.

The current levels of occupational and sectorial segregation between men and women are higher than the EU average (Thewlis et al 2004). Lack of flexibility at the top of professions often drives women towards setting up their own businesses. Just over one million women in the UK are now self-employed and the number of self-employed women has increased by 18% in five years. It is estimated that between

34.1% and 41.2% of the UK small business stock is either owned or co-owned by women (ONS 2006; Carter et al 2006).

Int20 mentions the support that other women give in her network and how they look out for each other's needs.

Int20: "Yes, a lot, cause really you're befriending people even if you don't mean to cause there was a woman that I used to work for, anyway, just going to meet her every now and then she would point me in directions of training or the right events to go to and now there's a warmth there, she'll remember me if something crops up and I'll remember her. I think it's just that in an industry where 90% of the jobs don't go through the equal opportunities process, really if people think they can get on with you and you seem capable and not too cocky then they'll probably take you on." (37-year-old non-WEVH woman)

20% more non-WEVH women mentioned receiving more support from face-to-face networking with high figures in both groups -70% WEVH and 90% non-WEVH saying that it was used in this way. Int5 describes what she sees as the positive points to this and like many other women cites the sharing of information and a feeling that women are very encouraging and supportive of each other, which she feels, is very empowering. Both groups of women were very positive with regards to the amount and extent of support that they received from other women and it's clear that they both benefitted enormously from meeting up in real life. 40% of women from both groups worked from home and working from home is often isolating especially coupled with a low income (Rees 2002). An ESRI report indicated that whereas the 'average' male had spent 18 years in work, the 'average' woman had spent just 12. The lack of affordable, quality childcare provision was viewed as a key factor determining women's decisions to remain at home (ESRI 2000). In 2006, home working was available in one third of workplaces, but in only 10 per cent of establishments was the option available to all categories of staff. The distribution of home working in the UK has not changed significantly since 2002 (Smeaton 2007).

Int5: “I think networking is key to everything, especially with what I do. People who are interested in you and who are willing to help you and having good access to them and good ability to share tips and information is really, really important especially when you are starting off in something. It's great because you've always got people that you can ask for advice but also you can pass advice onto other people, it gives you that feeling of being able to help, that you are someone that people can ask about things, which is quite encouraging, as well. Which is another reason why DIY methods of distributing and promoting music are particularly accessible to women, this idea of networking and swapping information really does empower everybody, it doesn't involve a hierarchy of a few people at the top who know everything and then everyone else who has to ask them the questions or advice, I think that how women can often feel excluded from environments, different environments to me where I've often seen women excluded, they're usually environments where their opinions are not considered important, where in DIY networks everyone is swapping advice with everyone else. In DIY networks there can be hierarchies, in certain places, because they do tend to occur but overall they are on a much more equal footing.” (25-year-old non-WEVH woman)

10.4. Chapter Summary

The results relating to theme five are presented in this chapter. When looking at networks both sets of women were using the same ones and both groups felt that they got support from them. Again when it came to talking about meetings outside of work both groups of women had similar patterns of working and both mentioned the old boy's network. When asked about how networking affected them both groups of women felt that it gave them a sense of inclusion, that their career opportunities were depended on it and that they got support from it. Slightly more non-WEVH women mentioned support.

Chapter 11

11. Concluding Summary of Key Research Findings

This chapter brings together the results from this survey, relating them to the study's aims. Firstly, Section 11.1 focuses on the first theme of the study, experience of training. Section 11.2 discusses findings relating to the second theme, lived experiences of the workplace. Section 11.3 looks at language/ability to articulate women's position in the contemporary workplace. Section 11.4 looks at the influence of women's awareness of gender politics/feminism. Finally, 11.5 offers an insight into the fifth theme of the study, networks.

This study explored the experiences of two groups of women who had very different training experiences. One group attended a women-only multimedia-training course run by women for women whereas the other group had trained in a mixed gender setting. The main focus of this study was to question whether having attended a new media course that included gender politics/feminism as an intrinsic part of its approach enabled women to have a better understanding of dominant gender relations at play in the workplace. The study hoped to gain an insight and understanding of the effect this had, if any, on women's everyday lives by looking at their career trajectories, life/work balances and self-esteem as well as their hopes and ambitions for their future.

11.0. Experience of Training

This study explored women's initial experiences of technology and new media. It also examined their awareness of dominant gender relations in the workplace and looked at how their on-going training needs were met. Results relating to this theme were presented in chapter five. There was a significant difference between the two groups with regard to what attracted women to new media. Some 70% more non-WEVH women mentioned the Internet but this can be explained by the fact that WEVH women were given Internet training as part of a wider course that included web-site building therefore their need to flag up the Internet as a separate entity was clearly less. Non-WEVH women also found it hard to find suitable courses whereas the WEVH women mentioned feminism being a factor in attracting them to/helping them to find their course at the WEVH (Dyson 2003; Walker 2004).

With regard to the second question the results showed that WEVH women more so than non-WEVH women felt that their course had prepared them in more than just technically for the workplace saying that it had also encouraged them to think about their work situation in a more alternative woman-orientated way when trying to secure the type of work that would fit with their lives outside of the workplace.

Having gender related discussions with other women on their course enabled WEVH women to obtain an overview of the cultural norms and values that restrict women in their working lives and helped them make more informed choices (Dyson 2003; Walker 2004; Ellen and Herman 2005). One of the interesting features of the WEVH course was to bring in women already working in the new media industry to share their experiences with the trainees and to encourage debate. The study shows allowing other women to see by example was very influential for WEVH women when it came to them making their own career decisions. On-going training was very problematic, with a slightly higher percentage of non-WEVH women having to pay

for their own training. More WEVH women had training provided for them by their employers a consideration that would have been flagged-up as part of the WEVH women's training at the WEVH (Gill 2002, 2007; Dyson 2003; Walker 2005).

11.1. Lived Experiences of the Workplace

In chapter six this survey looked at the structure and power dynamics of women's new media workplaces and explored their feelings of inclusion/exclusion from internal networks as well as seeking an insight into how women managed their work/life balance. Some of the more interesting findings were that 30% more WEVH women had female managers and when not self-employed were more likely to be found in hierarchical organisations than non-WEVH women. WEVH women also stated that their awareness of women's issues had influenced their decision to work in a more supportive/alternative set up (Richards and Milestone 2000; Walker 2004; Ellen and Herman 2005).

It could be concluded from this that WEVH women made a more conscious effort to be employed in organisations that had visible signs of being supportive to women by having female managers and a structure in place with formal channels and procedures to deal with complaints/disciplinary issues (Milliken and Morrison 2003; Banks and Milestone 2011). The private new media companies mentioned by the women in this study are flatbed structures with a 'post-feminism' political backdrop being manifested in the companies 'managers' having a distinct lack of commitment to women's issues which is in-line with other studies where similar companies saw women's issues as having already been dealt with rather than being on-going requiring their attention and support (Liff and Ward 2001; Gill 2002; Banks and Milestone 2011). One of the most disturbing findings raised by both groups of

women was the way in which these non-hierarchical new media managers handled conflict in that it often involved a considerable degree of bullying and humiliation in the open plan 'studios' with people feeling quite powerless to object for fear of not having their contracts renewed or being given less favourable tasks (Milliken and Morrison 2003: 4). There are, however, still problems with hierarchical organisations. The women in this study reported that middle managers, usually women carrying out orders from the next level above which is staffed by men, are often unsympathetic, especially around flexible work, part-time work, and childcare/dependant issues (Devine 1992; Liff and Ward 2001; Simpson 1998). Over 40% more WEVH women voiced concerns over women's jobs not being seen as being technical when they clearly were (Cockburn 1985; Henwood 1993; Banks and Milestone 2011) whereas 20% more non-WEVH women thought that women were seen as being technically minded by their colleagues even if not so by the workplace, in that they were sought out by their workmates for technical advice (Clegg and Trayburn 1999). The difference in how the two groups of women conveyed their experiences could again point to an underlying difference in how the two groups view these disparities in that the WEVH women viewed them as organisational issues to do with gender as opposed to them being problems experienced by individual women in the office (Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005b). In this section the WEVH women also pointed out that flexible working wasn't always about supporting women but indeed could be quite the reverse (Gill 2002; Ellen and Herman 2005). Non-WEVH women tended to see flexible working as a positive step and also that childcare considerations were a personal choice again showing that their viewpoints were more influenced by liberal political thinking. The bulimic culture of the industry was flagged up more by WEVH women, especially those with

children, and was given as a reason for preferring to remain self-employed (Gill 2002; Walker 2004; Wharton 2005; Piderit and Ashworth 2003). Obtaining work through word of mouth was also raised as being problematic by WEVH women whereas non-WEVH women didn't mention any down sides (Richards and Milestone 2000; Gill 2002, 2007). Again, this could be to do with a political overview informed by liberal feminist politics for the non-WEVH women who equally saw getting on as largely down to the individual woman and her ability to succeed with networking being a large part of that. The type of networking where women have to hang out in pubs and clubs has been widely documented as being problematic and with the new media industry mimicking the music industry in this respect it is hardly surprising that it is mainly older women who are aware of the issues as it is older women who are discriminated against, although not exclusively (Richards and Milestone 2000).

11.2. Women's Voices in the Workplace

This theme looked at women's position in the workplace focusing on the barriers they may face, conflict resolution and their career prospects. Non-WEVH women's response to what they thought women's career decisions were based on fell in with the liberal feminist position in that they saw women as being self-determining and that if they possessed the right skills, felt passionate about their work, were innovative and confident enough then a good quality of life should follow (Gill 2002, 2007; McRobbie 2004; Griffiths and Moore 2006; More et al 2005a). WEVH women didn't share their enthusiasm and were more critical mentioning both women's age and childcare as being major influences on women's career decisions, more so than skills and confidence (Ellen and Herman 2005). Like non-WEVH women, WEVH women thought that quality of life was very important but again wider issues such as finance were brought in whereas non-WEVH placed greater emphasis on the

qualities of the individual woman (Henwood 1996, 1999). When specifically asked about the barriers that they faced, again there was a significant difference in the number of WEVH women mentioning wider issues. One non-WEVH woman mentioned age and being available for work as well as childcare issues (Simpson 1998; Von Hellens et al 2004). This woman also happened to state her sexuality as lesbian. Being lesbian/gay and having a background in gay politics often means that gay people are more radicalized from having to deal with sexuality issues in a dominant heteronormative culture (Stepulevage 1997). When asked about what their career prospects were dependent on, 40% more WEVH women felt that it was down to social policy whereas 40% more non-WEVH women thought that it was down to the individual woman's passion and 70% non-WEVH women also felt it was dependent on the individual woman's networking skills. Again in this question non-WEVH women come across as having more liberal views (McRobbie 2004) whereas WEVH women offered a more radical explanation for what they were experiencing, mentioning childcare, always being available for work, age, bargaining power, nationality and the glass ceiling showing more of an understanding of the gender technology relations at play in their everyday working environment.

11.3. Awareness of Gender Issues

An insight into effects of gender politics/feminism was highlighted from the questions relating to this theme and the decisions and influences that have shaped their career choices and trajectories. The main difference here was that all but one

WEVH woman mentioned the WEVH as being a major influence on their career as well as feminism whereas the non-WEVH women mentioned individual characteristics and feminism to a lesser degree (McRobbie 2004). When it came to looking at their achievements and current work positions WEVH women did mention individual characteristics but also feminism and the WEVH (Walker 2005). Being a female led company was thought to be a key to success by all the women (Walker 2004). Again, alongside this 40% more non-WEVH women thought that luck was an important factor (Moore, Griffiths and Richardson 2005a; 2005b). Over 50% of both sets of women set up their own businesses to try and ensure that their needs as women were met. Non-WEVH women, however put their success down to being confident (Gill 2002; McRobbie 2004). Interestingly when asked about barriers to their success 80% of non-WEVH women mentioned the culture as being a barrier to their success. Although non-WEVH women recognised patriarchal culture as a barrier, it is how this barrier can be overcome that exposes the difference between the two groups. Finance was also specifically mentioned as a barrier by 30% more WEVH women and the statistics showed that women over the age of 50 in particular were very concerned about aging and job security (Cockburn 1983 and 1985; Thewlis et al 2004). Fully 90% of non-WEVH women felt that their future careers were within their control whereas only 50% of WEVH women did, again indicating a major difference in their personal politics. WEVH women mentioned loss of network, and ageism as two of the contributing factors. These two factors also go hand in hand as older women do feel less able to 'network' in the way that the industry expects in the new media sector as mentioned earlier (Richards and Milestone 2000).

11.4. Networks

The final theme of the study focused on women's experiences of networks. All of the women in the study used on-line networks and there was little difference between the two groups in terms of the support they felt that they received. Both groups also mentioned that men tended to dominate the more specialised on-line art and music networks and that they had needed to develop strategies to ensure that their voices were heard. This was clearly something that was ongoing and quite problematic (Walker 2004; Turkle 1988, 1995). Again, all of the women were keen to state that face to face meetings were very important for business and for those who were self-employed were an essential part of ensuring clarity as well as repeat business as it personalised the business relationship. This however worked against women who were employed (Moore et al 2005a) and those women who weren't available for networking because of childcare commitments. This indicated that the 'old boys network' was still very much alive, as were the constraints placed on women such as childcare and feeling uncomfortable/unsafe in a bar on their own late at night (Cockburn 1983 and 1985; Liff and Ward 2001; Finch and Groves 1983; Walker 2004; Moore et al 2005a; Richards and Milestone 2000).

The majority of both sets of women did say that the variety of networking options available to them did have a direct effect on how they operated in the workplace in that they felt supported and thus more able to deal with their working relationships (Faulkner 2000; Gatrell 2005; Morrison and Milliken 2003; Piderit and Ashworth 2003).

Chapter 12

12. Conclusion

12.0. Introduction

This thesis grew out of a desire to explore the everyday lives of two groups of women working in the new media industry focusing on the role new media/ICT training had on influencing their career trajectories, life/work balances, self-esteem as well as their hopes and ambitions for the future. The main aim of the study was to find out if women-only training gave women a clearer understanding of the gender-technology relations at play in the workplace that both shape and are shaped by socio-cultural relations in the wider society (Henwood 1993; Hughes 2001; Milestone and Meyer 2011).

There are few qualitative studies of women new media workers that focus on their experiences in a work context. As outlined in the Introduction and Methodology chapters, the work on this thesis began with a review of literature including policy documents followed by interviews with women who had trained at the WEVH and women who had trained in a mixed sex environment. The study was not intended to be an ‘impact study’ or formal evaluation of the WEVH’s activities but set out to add to our academic knowledge the effect of women-only training on women’s career trajectories and provide a basis on which policy makers could look to further action. There are no recommendations as such but there are some general conclusions, which will be useful for agencies working in this area as well as the wider academic community.

12.1. Summary of Findings

Initially, literature on both the ICT and New Media industries in relation to gender was reviewed as well training and education in these areas. The literature shows that recruitment of women onto A-Level and Higher Education New Media related courses are at an all time low (Skillset 2008). There are few campaigns to encourage girls and women into the industry and those that do exist are run by e-skills UK and Skillset, who work on behalf of employers to develop technology expertise (Shepherd 2012). Current initiatives are still focusing on the same strategies that have in the past failed to attract and retain female students (Computer Weekly 2008).

The findings from this study show that the fundamental mistake being made by these initiatives is the assumption that women don't know or can't envisage what a male dominated workplace would be like to work in. They think that by 'enlightening' women they will somehow overcome this concern and being more 'informed' will ensure that they will want to be part of the company/organisation and adapt to the male-dominated culture. There is an expectation that this will be done without any acknowledgement of the process, which assumes that women are not only lacking in their understanding of what the industry has to offer them but that they are also willing to accept the cultural conditions that go hand-in-hand with the job offer.

Recruitment agencies such as e-skills UK and Skillset with its 'Big Ambition' recruitment drive (Computer Weekly 2008) are working in the interests of the industry and have failed to recognize that it is the industry that needs changing and not women's attitudes to it. Giving young girls computer engineer Barbie dolls and

steering them towards business applications (Shepherd 2012) isn't going to solve the problem: both groups of women in this study have said that what inspired them most was seeing other women doing the jobs they wanted to do. This study highlights that we need more women-only training organizations like the WEVH as we simply haven't reached the stage in our culture where the needs and aspirations of women are being treated with the same regard as those of men.

What made the WEVH unique was that its courses were designed around the needs of its female students resulting in very low drop out and high retention rates. The results tell us that these WEVH women-centered courses enabled students to make informed choices about their careers with gender in mind and at the same time build a valuable support network of women who they could discuss these issues with, share experiences and advise one another.

The WEVH provided a much needed space where the dominant heteronormative culture could be discussed and debated. It not only provided women with a space where alternative ways of interacting were accepted and encouraged (Wharton 2005) but inspired them to take those ideas and different ways of working/being to create and transform other spaces encouraging other women to question that what was 'normally' expected from them was just that, the 'norm' and that there are alternatives. This transformation of space where gender is very much on the agenda has enabled those women who trained at the WEVH to make a difference in the wider community by sharing their knowledge and skills, influencing the lives of others through setting up their own private sector businesses, voluntary sector projects, city council funded initiatives and teaching part-time in our colleges and

universities where the wider community benefits from their thoughts, ideas, networks and ways of working influenced by their training at the WEVH. The findings showed that space, whether virtual or in real life is still very much dominated by men making these networks for women invaluable and necessary for any real or lasting change to come about.

Statistics show that women are leaving the industry to have children and are not returning (Gill 2007; Skillset 2010). A recent article in The Guardian newspaper on women from all job sectors based in London shows that a combination of the high cost of childcare (up to a third higher than the national average), the distances travelled and the difficulty of finding flexible jobs all appear to be deterring a large number of women from actually working (Martinson 2012). The results from this research support these findings for the new media sector and show that women with children are actively choosing to be self-employed or freelance in order to balance their home and working lives.

This study also shows that women who attended women-only training are choosing to work for the public/voluntary sector where they feel they will be better protected/supported as women because these organisations have a formal complaints procedure and proper line management in place. The findings show that women do want to work in new media but because as women they are still primarily responsible for child-rearing, working conditions that enable them to do both are the key enabler.

Flexibility has to be seen from that which benefits the woman as opposed to one that only benefits the employer and in the case of returning mothers it effectively keeps

older, more experienced women out of the workplace. Perhaps, as well as ensuring women's needs are taken into account we should be looking at how they could be recompensed in the mean time. Since most places of employment don't provide crèche facilities or payment for childcare and are only too quick to place women on the 'mummy' track in terms of their career, perhaps it is time for women to be paid for the work that the culture of our society expects and in effect demands of them.

There was a high degree of embeddedness in local social and cultural contexts and again, this study shows that women have been excluded from these spheres and find it difficult to operate in them due to their informal nature and the taken for granted 24 hour lifestyle where business is conducted in clubs and pubs, public areas this study has highlighted are still problematic for women to operate in on their own. The research also shows that women who have started off working in this area are, as they've gotten older actively choosing to change careers and are opting to work in the voluntary and public sectors knowing that the working conditions will be better for their careers especially if they have childcare responsibilities. This sector is therefore losing its older women role models and in doing so is sending a clear message out to younger women thinking of joining the industry.

The results from this survey show that women who trained at the WEVH had a better all-round overview of their position in the workplace and were better equipped when making decisions about the working conditions that would best serve their needs. As mentioned earlier the discussion of working conditions was very much a part of the teachings at the WEVH. Women working in the sector were invited to the WEVH to give women an honest and realistic idea of what to expect which is quite different from the industry sponsored talks from women working in the field in that there is no

bias. Women were encouraged to think about the job conditions that would suit them from the hours offered to the management structure of the organisation. This study shows that that women-only training is a vital component of mainstreaming, as without it women who don't have access to alternative culture in their everyday lives wouldn't have an alternative to the dominant culture. Being exposed to these alternatives encourages change to evolve as does seeing other women setting an example and being inspired by other women doing interesting work. Gender awareness, however is not the only factor at play here as sexuality, race and disability issues also gave both WEVH and non-WEVH women a valuable insight into the barriers, conditions and constraints faced by women in the workplace.

In chapter 2 the literature concerned with, 'what is new media?' is explored with a focus on the changes in production from a Fordist to a post-Fordism model (Castells 1996; Flew, 2002) providing an ideal environment for the new media sector to flourish in the already established specialised cultural industries with its promise of new ways of working that should have enabled women to take up an equal role in the workplace (Milestone and Meyer 2011). This research has shown that instead, these new flatbed management structures have been detrimental to women especially when faced with discrimination in the workplace as management rarely have managerial experience and there is seldom a complaints procedure in place to deal with issues or problems. Instead, they are dealt with on an ad-hoc basis as and when they arise on an individual basis. Sexism is often not even acknowledged and if it does occur then women are expected to just laugh it off as it is being said/done in an 'ironic way' and that there is now no need to challenge sexism in the workplace since feminism has dealt with it already as opposed to it being an on-going struggle, requiring discussion

and debate as well as support from informed and trained management who should be equipped to act appropriately using procedures that are consistent and transparent for all to see and feel protected by (Gill 2002; Banks and Milestone 2011). The results from this survey showed that there is an understanding that the veneer of equality is what should be acceptable to women otherwise they are seen as being unreasonable or that they are not a 'player' and because women are in the minority they are put in the position of having their career prospects threatened if they are not complicit or dare to speak out. With the new open planned office space it is not uncommon for workers to be 'dressed down' by their bosses, which is all very intimidating for the other workers in the room and serves to further silence women. It also doesn't help that the risks and rewards of new media work have become highly individualised, and that success and failure are seen to be the individual's own responsibility rather than that of the employer (Gill 1993; Henwood 1996; Banks 2007).

In 2011 the government sent out a clear message to women with the abolishment of the Women's National Commission, a body set up to provide dialogue between government and women to directly influence government policy. This move will make it much harder for the government to devise informed policy that reflects the position of women in the workplace and also shows that this coalition government, rather than choosing to support women when the economy is on a downturn, have instead, bowed to the demands of big business leaving a question mark above the furthering of equality in the UK (Bird 2012). At the 1978 Birmingham Women's Liberation conference, seven demands were made, the second of which was equal education and job opportunities. Until we have achieved this and the other six basic demands and ensure that our young women and men are be made aware of this

history and its on-going relevance to their lives any real progress will be difficult as we're failing to build on what has already been achieved. It is like forever building sand castles on the shore, as each new generation has to start afresh as opposed to building on the solid foundations that have been laid before.

12.3. Suggestions for Further Study

This study sought to address the gap in knowledge, theory and practice by exploring how women-only new media training influences women's career choices and experiences focusing on their everyday working lives. Chapter 12.0 shows how the study has contributed to furthering this knowledge in that it offers an original contribution by advancing the knowledge of women-only training in a sector where knowledge is minimal. The survey contributed to theory by highlighting the gendered patterns of behaviour present within the new media industry an emerging sector showing that the dominant gender relations at play in society are in turn shaping gender technology relations in an emerging work environment. In terms of practice this study shows that innovative new media training methodologies can indeed shape women's career decisions enabling them to make informed choices by undertaking new media training that is underpinned with feminism thus giving them both the political and historical background of gender-technology relations enabling them to gain both an overview and at the same time contextualise their own life-work situation. With this being still a relatively new area of study it would be interesting to re-visit these women in five years and then ten years time as some of the women in their fifties were concerned for their future and put this down to their age in an industry where there are so few older women especially in the private sector. It is good to know that after five/six years some of the women are still networking with

women that they met through the WEVH. It would be interesting to see if this continues and how it develops.

I feel very passionate about women-only training and from interviewing and hearing how it has influenced women's lives in so many positive and useful ways I'd also like to see further research into the training that is being provided on a national basis and whether we will see a shift in policy given that successive recruitment drives that continue to focus on the needs of the employer have failed. It would be interesting to see if the industry were interested in promoting women-only courses given their success rate.

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Appendices

Appendix1: Interview Questions

Does having attended new media training that includes gender politics/feminism as an intrinsic part of its approach enable women to have a better understanding of dominant gender relations of/at play in the workplace. How does this affect the lives of women in terms of their career, position in the workplace (negotiating), life/work balance, self-esteem, levels of ambition

Theme 1

Experience of Training

Initial experiences of technology/new media, awareness of dominant gender relations in the workplace via training program, meeting ongoing training requirements

1. How did you become interested in new media?
From early interests, through school, college work -an interest in technology - was this supported along the way or hindered why/how /where /when how did they find their path.
2. Aside from the technical aspect of the training, do you think that it has prepared you in any way for the work environment and in what way?
What are the differences in expectations and reality of the social aspect of the environment? Types of work (gendered) Levels of support. Workload.
3. Is your training for your work on-going?
How is this supported financially/time, personal development? Do you have the same opportunities as male colleagues, if not why not.

Theme 2

Lived experience of the workplace?

Structure and power dynamics of the workspace, inclusion/exclusion from internal networks, work/life balance

1. How is your workplace structured?
What type of work are women doing - job description/job title/sector Are they managing/who are they managing i.e. men/women, amount of responsibility/power
2. Are women's jobs perceived as being technical?
Gendered by design
3. Do you work from home/office/studio?
What is this decision based on? How does this affect your home/work life? How does these affect feelings of inclusion/exclusion in the workplace.
4. What is your workload like and how do you manage it?

Is it project-based work with deadlines/routine work and are these manageable. Are you doing your own work or teaching? What influences these decisions (job security, regular hours, child friendly hours/hols/ not being in the private sector loop or available 24/7) Is division of labour at home a factor and how does it shape your choice of work. Are you happy/satisfied with your work - how could it be improved on.

5. How did you find out about your current job(s)?
Secure/negotiate/future work? What have been the pros/cons of this word of mouth, being in the 'loop' internal networks

Theme 3

Language/ability to articulate women's position in the contemporary workplace

Women's position in workplace, barriers, conflict resolution, career prospects

1. What are women's career decisions based on?
Personal interest, Career minded, Happiness, Having to take in needs of the family/dependents/regular money, The work environment - does it suit/support women pt/ft decisions, regular work/money, flexible hours/childcare - hrs/hols.
2. Do you think women face particular barriers in the workplace?
What are these barriers and how do they work. Are the barriers recognised in workplace. How is this discussed/resolved?
3. How is conflict dealt with?
Transparency, Formal channels for resolution.
4. What are your career prospects dependent upon?
Project based 24/7 driven being 'seen' as a player and available. Are p/t workers taken seriously, their bargaining power i.e. how powerful a position they are in at the workplace.

Theme 4

Awareness of gender politics/feminism

Influence on career choices and decisions, limiting factors, career trajectories

1. What have been the major influences on your career?
Increased opportunities for women due to legislation, Education, Equal Opportunities, Changes in expectations for women, Role models
2. How have you achieved this?
How have they managed to get where they are? Serendipity - right time/right place, sheer graft, who/what they know, historical stuff e.g. '80's politics and all the schemes that were going on, prince's trust etc, punk/ can do mentality.
3. Is their current position one in which they had envisioned after doing their course/courses?
Is there a discrepancy between what you thought was achievable and your current situation. What other structures/influences are at play/ affect women's prospects.
4. What have been the barriers?
How is this understood/ why do they think this is happening now.

5. Where do you see yourself in the future and to what extent do you believe that you can determine this?

Theme 5

Networks

Types of networks, role/function of the networks, whose network

1. Do you use networks?
What type of networks are women using. Are women networking with each other? How does this work and what do they network about - e.g. work opportunities, support, advice, sharing skills/ software etc - is this happening and does it make a difference.
2. Do you have face-to-face meetings outside of work?
Are these meetings accessible to women? Are men and women doing this together? Are women fully included if not - why not? How is this functioning i.e. is it down the pub and has the Internet made a difference.
3. How do you think networking affects you?
Career opportunities, increase your visibility in the workplace, does this affect relationships at work, does this affect your coping mechanisms e.g. in relation to confidence levels and sense of inclusion/exclusion.

Appendix 2: Letter to Potential Interviewees

I'm going to be conducting a survey for my PhD at Manchester Metropolitan University that will be looking at women's experiences of the new media industry.

I'm interested in how women voice these experiences. I'm also interested in their career trajectories and their views on how these have been shaped. It's all quite exploratory but do let me know if you need to know more about this part.

I'd like to interview women who have been working in the new media industry and this can be the public, private, voluntary sector or a mix - anything really. The interviews are scheduled for this summer in mcr possibly june/july depending on when most women are available. All of this would be strictly private and confidential.

I hope this information is useful. I'm happy to tell you anything else you'd like to know - just ask :)

Contact details supplied.

Appendix 3: Questions - Grid Analysis

Theme 1 Experience of Training

1. How did you become interested in new media?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Friend/colleague	1					1														1	3
EVH	1																				1
WEVH			1	1					1	1	1	1			1					1	8
Art work	1	1		1		1			1					1	1			1	1		9
Film/Graphics/Print									1		1			1	1	1	1		1		7
MUWIC/MMU													1								1
Music					1			1			1		1							1	5
Bad Course		1	1							1				1							4
H/E Course	1							1						1					1		4
Post Grad Course								1											1		3
	1																				
WEA/IDEA		1																1			2
Self Taught		1			1		1	1			1			1			1	1	1	1	9
Feminism/books		1	1																	1	3
Development	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Work Experience	1	1												1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Not left Behind	1	1					1	1			1			1	1			1	1	1	10
To be a Pioneer		1									1		1	1	1			1	1	1	8
Technology Inspired	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1		1		1	1		1		1		1	14
Comm./Networking			1	1	1		1	1	1		1		1	1			1	1	1	1	13
New Market					1		1	1			1		1	1				1		1	8
Support	0	0	1	1	0		0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	11
Lack of resources	1	1					1	1			1	1	1	1							8
	10	11	7	6	6		6	7	9	6	4	10	3	8	12	8	5	6	11	11	13

2. Aside from the technical aspect of the training, do you think that it has prepared you in any way for the work environment and in what way?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Multiskilled	1																				1
Ideas driven	1								1				1								3
Technically A1	1		1	1				1	1	1			1								7
Trans skills	1								1	1											3
New Media not delivered	1																		1		2
Alternative lifestyle	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1											10
On-line enriching life	1							1	1				1								4
Mixed training problematic		1																	1		2
Confidence			1	1					1	1			1								5
Opened door to new life			1	1				1	1	1			1								6
Inspired/excited			1						1	1			1								4
Went onto Post Grad IT course				1																	1
Course great socially			1	1					1												3
Self taught					1	1	1									1					4
Women Inspired networking								1	1								1				3
External Support														1				1			2
Learn to work 24/7																			1	1	2
Prep	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
Poor Training		1																			

No prep for mix work group			1																1	2
	8	3	7	7	2	2	2	6	11	7	0	0	6	1	0	1	1	1	1	4

3. Is your training for your work on-going?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Self taught	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	18
Own time	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1			1			1	14
Work time									1						1	1		1	1		5
Employer paid									1						1	1		1			4
Self paid													1	1			1				3
No Time										1		1								1	3
Training on-going	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	19
Same training as men									1				0		1	1			1	0	4
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	1	3	3	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	3	

Theme 2

Lived experience of the workplace?

Structure and power dynamics of the workspace, inclusion/exclusion from internal networks, work/life balance

1. How is your workplace structured?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Managing both	1	1					1		1						1	1		1			7
Men managing			1	1									1			1	1		1	1	7
Non-hierarchical					1			1		1	1	1		1							6
Men managing men						1															1
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1		1

2. Are women's jobs perceived as being technical?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
													13								
Seen as technical	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	7
Technical skills negated		1																			1
Men seen as more technical								1													1
More	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	

3. Do you work from home/office/studio?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Office	1						1	1	1	1			1		1	1	1	1	1		11
Flexible			1				1	1	1							1	1		1		7
Required to	1												1		1			1			4
Home		1		1	1	1					1	1		1						1	8
Homework at night	1								1												2
Portable studio		1																			
	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	

4. What is your workload like and how do you manage it?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Project based	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Set hours	1														1	1			1		4
Finish off at home	1								1						1	1					4
Childcare	1			1		1					1	1			1						6
Overworked	1	1	1		1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	18
Work very patchy				1		1					1	1		1						1	5
	5	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	4	3	1	1	2	2	

5. How did you find out about your current job(s)?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Newspaper	1															1					2
Networks		1															1				2
Word of Mouth			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	16
Set up company				1	1	1	1		1		1	1		1							8
	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	

Theme 3

Language/ability to articulate women's position in the contemporary workplace

Women's position in workplace, barriers, conflict resolution, career prospects

1. What are women's career decisions based on?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Opportunity					5																
Family/Dependents	1		1				1	1	1	1	1	1				1		1			10
Personal ambition		1	1				1	1					1			1	1			1	8
Passion	1	1		1	1			1			1	1	1	1			1			1	11
Need for money	1	1													1	1					4
Changes with age	1	1	1						1				1			1					6
Right time/place	1						1		1	1			1	1		1	1			1	9
Skills/confidence								1			1	1	1	1		1			1		7
Support network									1				1				1				3
Independence															1				1		2
Socialization																			1		1
Quality of Life	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	16
	6	5	4	2	1	5	5	5	5	3	4	4	7	3	2	7	5	1	4	4	

2. Do you think women face particular barriers in the workplace?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Barriers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Good at your job	1		1													1					3
Class		1														1					2
Childcare/dependents		1				1	1											1			4
Available to work when/where long hrs	1	1	1								1	1			1	1					7
Age			1			1					1					1					4
Glass ceiling									1												1
Erasure of past women's voices					1															1	2
Sexism lad culture	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	16
Should behave in certain way																					
Bargaining power										1						1					2
Recognition own work																	1		1		2
Nationality				1																1	2
	4	5	5	3	3	4	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	7	2	3	4	4	

3. How is conflict dealt with?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Dealt with	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Procedures	1				1	1	1		1					1	1	1		1			9
Depends who is in charge despite policy	1																				1
Badly		1	1	1			1						1	1	1	1	1	1	1		11
Chatting							1	1		1	1	1								1	6
Very patriarchal																	1				1
	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	

4. What are your career prospects dependent upon?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
What is produced	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1					1	1	14
Funding/money generated by self	1		1				1	1	1	1											6
Full time/24-7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1				1		14
Social policy			1						1							1	1				4
Bargaining power based on skills			1			1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1			1	1	1	12
Passion							1	1	1					1			1	1		1	7
Networking							1	1	1	1	1		1	1			1	1	1	1	11
Boss's ref													1								1
Compromise fit in with mainstream					1								1		1				1		4
	3	2	5	2	2	3	6	6	7	5	3	1	4	5	3	1	3	3	5	4	

Theme 4

Awareness of gender politics/feminism

Influence on career choices and decisions, limiting factors, career trajectories

1. What have been the major influences on your career?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Women/men doing	1	1		1	1				1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	15
Feminism/ists	1	1		1	1				1			1		1		1	1			1	10
Family/friends		1							1			1	1	1	1		1			1	8
Serendipity			1		1						1	1					1				5
WEVH	1		1	1					1	1	1	1			1	1					9
Passion/Determined	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1			1			1	1	1	1	1	1	17
Willing to take risks		1	1	1	1		1		1			1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	14
	3	5	4	5	5	1	1	1	6	1	1	6	3	5	4	5	6	3	3	5	

2. How have you achieved this?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Mentor	1							1								1	1	1			5
Female led	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Hard work		1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	17
Resourceful		1				1			1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13
Serendipity							1	1		1		1	1				1	1	1		8
Own boss create												1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Aware of trends	1	1			1		1	1	1	1	1					1	1	1	1	1	13
Networking	1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	16
	3	4	1	2	2	3	4	5	4	5	2	5	4	4	4	6	7	7	6	6	

3. Is their current position one in which they had envisioned after doing their course/courses?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Envisaged	0	0	0	0	1	0		0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	7
Politics	1	1																			
Technology changes			1										1								2
Not encouraged as much as men						1							1								2
Language				1																	1
Confidence								1		1	1						1	1	1		6
Created own job		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1								1	11
Need money																			1	1	2
Health issues																				1	1
Confidence lack of						1								1	1	1			1	1	6
	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	5	

4. What have been the barriers?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Capitalism	1													1							1
Class		1																			1
Money		1							1			1				1			1		5
Racism				1																	
Patriarchy/culture						1	1	1					1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
Age			1			1															2
None so far					1																1
Lack of recourses										1	1			1							3
Self determined					1		1	1		1		1				1			1		7
	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	3	3	1	3	1	1	3	1	

5. Where do you see yourself in the future and to what extent do you believe that you can determine this?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Has vision	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	18
Use of tech not fitting with politics	1												1	1							3
Travel		1							1								1				3
Decision maker		1							1				1					1	1	1	6
Loss of/ no network			1			1															2
Will make it happen	1	1		1			1	1	1		1			1			1	1	1	1	13
No change					1					1						1	1			1	5
Ageism			1			1										1					3
Excited about future							1	1	1	1	1	1					1	1		1	9
	3	4	2	2	3	2	3	3	5	3	3	2	3	3	1	3	5	4	3	5	

Theme 5

Networks

Types of networks, role/function of the networks, whose network

1. Do you use networks?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Using Networks	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Facebook	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Arts/Music Networks	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Feel Supported	1		1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	17
	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	

2. Do you have face-to-face meetings outside of work?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Face to Face	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Old boy's Network	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Meetings Accessible	1		1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	17
	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	

3. How do you think networking affects you?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Inclusion	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
Career Opportunities	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	18
Support	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1			1	1	1	1	16
	3	1	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	

Appendix 4: Demographics

Int	Age	E or s/e	Job title	Salary	Pt /ft	Sexuality	Marital Status	Dependents	Nationality	Class	Disability
1	47	e	Research cluster leader	32k	f/t	het	Married	2	Black British	w/c to m/c	None
2	53	s/e	Creative practitioner	0	f/t	celibate	Single	1	Asian British	w/c	Dyslexia
3	58	e	Research associate	36k	f/t	het	Married	3	White British	w/c to m/c	None
4	47	s/e	Photographer	0	p/t	het	Married	1	Turkish	m/c	None
5	25	s/e	Radio dj	grant	f/t	bi	Partner	no	White British	m/c	Registered blind
6	49	s/e	Web designer	14k	f/t	gay	Single	2	White British	w/c to m/c	Dyslexia
7	39	s/e	Events consultant	50k	f/t	gay	Single	no	White British	w/c to m/c	None
8	37	s/e	Director	35k	f/t	gay	single	no	Black British	w/c to m/c	Dyslexia
9	46	e	Arts dev manager	30k	f/t	het	married	2	White British	w/c to m/c	None
10	46	s/e	Web designer	20k	f/t	het	partner	no	White British	Wc to m/c	None
11	39	s/e	Web developer	fluc	p/t	gay	married	2	White British	Lower m/c	None
12	39	s/e	Creative consultant	12k	f/t	gay	married	2	White British	m/c	None
13	39	e	Project manager	30k		het	single	no	White British	m/c	None
14	46	s/e	Interactive artist	low	f/t	gay	partner	no	Scottish/Asian	Activist	None
15	38	e	Interactive media trainer	30k	f/t	gay	partner	1	White British	Wc to m/c	None
16	54	e	Assistant learning manager	36k	f/t	gay	partner	no	White British	m/c	None
17	46	e	Senior lecturer	43k	f/t	het	single	1	European	m/c	None
18	43	e	Video designer	24k	f/t	bi	single	no	White British	w/c to m/c	Dyslexia
19	41	e	Multi-media manager	45k	f/t	het	single	no	European	w/c to m/c	Dyslexia
20	37	s/e	Artist engineer/sound facilitator	0	f/t	undefined	partner	no	European	m/c	Chronic pain

Showing Comparison between WEVH and Non-Wevh Women

	All	WEVH	Non-WEVH
25 - 35 yrs	1		1
36-45 yrs	9	2	7
46-55 yrs	9	7	2
56-60 yrs	1	1	
Self-Employed	11	5	6
Employed	9	5	4
0 - 15k	8	4	3
16-25k	2	1	1
26- 35k	6	3	2
36-45k	4	2	2
46k-50k	1		1
F/t	18	9	9
P/t	2	1	1
Gay	8	4	4
Straight	8	5	3
Bi	2		2
Celibate	1	1	
Undefined	1		1
Married/Civil Partner	6	5	1
Partnership	6	3	3
Children/Dependants		8	2
None		2	8
Single	8	2	6
White British	12	7	5
Asian/Scottish	1		1
European	3		3
Turkish	1	1	
Black British	2	1	1
Asian British	1	1	
W/c	1	1	
W/c to m/c	10	7	
Lower m/c	1		1
M/c	7	3	4
Activist	1		1
No Disabilities	13	8	5
Dyslexia	5	2	3
Blind	1		1
Chronic Pain	1		1

Appendix 5: Occupation Areas

Graph showing occupational areas of all the women in the study sample

